

# THE HAPPY HOLLISTERS

## AND THE MYSTERY OF THE LITTLE MERMAID

JERRY WEST



ILLUSTRATED BY  
HELEN S. HAMILTON

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While winging their way to Denmark the Hollister family become friendly with a member of the Queen of Denmark's staff. She is bringing home the Queen's own valuable reproduction of the "Little Mermaid," the famous statue that overlooks the harbor in Copenhagen. While she is showing the Hollisters the little figurine, another passenger expresses interest in seeing this rare treasure. His interest, however, strikes the five Hollister children as being more than just enthusiasm for the beauty and workmanship of the figurine. In the excitement of preparing to land at the Copenhagen airport, he is forgotten until, upon landing, the figurine is found to be missing.

From then on the Hollisters find themselves becoming more and more involved with the strange man with the beard and his rather peculiar activities. Much to the Hollisters' surprise they find not only is the figurine an object of mystery, but the trail of the bearded man is leading them to a ring of international thieves and their search for a bejeweled treasure, hidden centuries ago. The Hollisters finally discover a clue to this treasure from the study of the history of the ship models, hung in the churches of Denmark to honor lost seamen.

This new Hollister story should be a fine addition to the series, since it is the first time the Hollisters have traveled outside the Western Hemisphere.







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and the Mystery  
of the Little Mermaid*



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BY JERRY WEST

*Illustrated by Helen S. Hamilton*



GARDEN CITY, N.Y.

*Doubleday & Company, Inc.*



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## CHAPTER 1

### A FLYING MERMAID

"I SEE Denmark!" Pam Hollister exclaimed.

"Where?" her brother Ricky asked excitedly, and pressed his freckled nose against the airplane window.

"Down through the clouds. Look!"

Pam's cry had alerted the rest of the Hollister family. In front of Pam and Pete were Ricky and Holly. Back of them were their parents, with little Sue dozing on her mother's lap.

Now the little dark-haired girl sat up and gazed eagerly through a big hole in the fluffy white clouds. "I see a fairy's castle!" she exclaimed.

"That's the famous Kronborg Castle," said the attractive blond stewardess who was walking up the aisle. "Some people know it as Hamlet's Castle and say the ghost of an old king still walks around."

"Let's go there and hunt for the ghost!" Ricky proposed enthusiastically.

"Who was Hamlet?" Holly called back. Briefly Mrs. Hollister explained that he was the hero in a play by William Shakespeare.

Kronborg's towers rose high into the sky, and sunshine glistened on the moat surrounding the castle.

Holly said to the stewardess, "We solved a ghost

mystery once when we moved into our new house in Shoreham. That's in the United States."

Hearing this, a young woman seated across the aisle from Pam and Pete leaned over and asked, "Is this your first trip to Copenhagen?"

"Yes, it is," Pam replied to the traveler, who held a small black velvet case on her lap.

Pam introduced herself and the rest of the Hollister family. She was proud of her pretty mother and her tall, handsome father who owned *The Trading Post*, a combination hardware and sports shop.

Pete was a good-looking boy of twelve with a crew cut and a friendly smile. Whenever the Hollister children found a mystery to solve, he liked to look for clues. So did Pam. She was ten, with fluffy blond bobbed hair and a kind heart to match her sweet face.

Ricky, seven, and Holly, who was six, were the family imps, but none the less lovable. Ricky's reddish hair was usually mussed. He was always ready to take a dare, such as balancing blindfolded on a fencepost. Tomboy Holly often imitated him, twirling her brown pigtails busily.

All the children doted on four-year-old Sue, who, Grandmother Hollister often said, was the cutest child this side of the moon.

Pam learned that the name of the woman who had spoken to her and Pete was Inger Petersen. She was returning from the United States and had boarded the plane at London. Miss Petersen said there were many interesting things to be seen in her country.

“First, you must visit the Little Mermaid in the harbor,” she told the Hollisters, “and also the Tivoli Gardens. That’s the greatest fun park for children in the whole world!”

Pam pressed for more information about the Little Mermaid.

“She’s not a real one, of course,” Miss Petersen said, smiling. “In fact, all stories about mermaids, those pretty young creatures with human bodies but fish tails in place of legs, are legends. The beautiful statue in Copenhagen harbor was erected in honor of the little mermaid in a fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, Denmark’s most beloved author. She’s sort of a symbol of Copenhagen and is now known all over the world.”

Several adult passengers had been listening to Miss Petersen’s story. Among them was a bearded man who sat two seats ahead of the Danish woman. When he turned to catch more of the conversation, Sue giggled.

“Mommy,” she said in a low voice, “let’s call him Mr. Bushyface!”

“Sh! Sh!” Mrs. Hollister said, holding a finger to the little girl’s lips. But the bearded man did not seem to have heard Sue’s remark.

It was apparent that he had been trying to catch every word of the story. Pete noticed that the man kept his right hand in his jacket pocket while he took out a cigarette and held a lighter to it, all with his left hand. The boy mentioned this to Pam.

"Maybe his right hand was hurt," whispered the kindhearted girl.

The children's attention returned to Miss Petersen, who said, "Since you've never seen the Little Mermaid, how would you like to look at a miniature of her?"

"Oh, yes!" Holly answered eagerly.

The children left their seats and crowded about Miss Petersen. She carefully opened the velvet case on her lap and from it lifted out the daintiest and most beautiful porcelain figurine that the Hollisters had ever seen.

"Oh, it's precious!" said Pam.

The tiny mermaid, a wistful expression on her delicate face, sat on a rock, her fish tail gracefully draped over it.

"May I hold her for a moment?" Holly asked.

"If you're very, very careful," the woman replied. She explained that the figurine belonged to the Danish royal family. "I am a secretary for them and was asked to go to New York, where this very fine replica of the Little Mermaid has been on exhibit. I am now returning it to the Queen."

Mrs. Hollister spoke up. "Perhaps the children shouldn't handle the figurine," she cautioned.

"It's all right," Miss Petersen said. "I'm sure they won't harm it."

As she handed the Little Mermaid to Holly, the bearded man fixed his gaze intently on it and watched



*She caught it neatly in her chubby hands!*

as she held the dainty porcelain piece close to her face.

"Oh, you're beautiful," Holly said. She giggled. "I think I'll put on a fish tail next time I go swimming!"

Pam asked if she, too, might hold the porcelain masterpiece. After she and Pete and Ricky had handled the little figure, Sue begged for a turn.

"Oh, I'm afraid something may——" Mrs. Hollister said worriedly, as Sue took the mermaid.

Just then the plane, circling to approach Copenhagen, hit a small air pocket. Dipping slightly, the aircraft bounced enough to throw Sue off balance and toss the figurine into the air.

The Hollisters cried out in consternation, and Miss Petersen drew in her breath sharply. All seemed to be alarmed except Sue. As the mermaid fell, she caught it neatly in her chubby hands!

"There, she didn't get hurted a bit," the little girl said, dimpling.

Ricky laughed. "She's a flying mermaid instead of a swimming one. Good catch, Sue!"

As Sue was about to return the figurine to Miss Petersen, the bearded man left his seat and asked in a low, husky voice, "May I see it, too?"

"Yes," Miss Petersen replied, "but I'd prefer showing her in the case."

She put the Little Mermaid back into the velvet-lined box and handed it to the man, who was holding out his left hand. His right one was still in his pocket.

Instead of looking at the figure there, he carried the box to his seat and sat down for several seconds. Then the others heard the case snap shut. The stranger arose, came back, and handed the box to Miss Petersen.

"Thank you. It is very fine workmanship," he commented.

Miss Petersen explained that Copenhagen was noted for its great works of art, and especially for its intricate porcelain and silver craftsmanship.

Hearing this, Pete smiled and put his hand into his jacket pocket. "Miss Petersen, would you like to see something keen from America?" he inquired.

"Why, of course."

Pete pulled out a black ivory penknife and showed it to her. On one side was a gold-embossed figure of a running collie dog. The boy explained that his Uncle Russ, a newspaper cartoonist, had given him the knife on his twelfth birthday.

"The collie is just like our dog Zip," he said.

"The knife is beautiful," the Danish woman remarked.

"I'd like to see it, too," called the deep voice of the bearded man.

Pete went forward to show the knife, and the man examined it carefully with his left hand before passing it back. Pete slipped the knife into his jacket pocket just as the light over the pilot's cabin signaled for the passengers to fasten their seat belts.

The Hollister children returned to their places and sat quietly as the plane circled lower and lower, finally

skimming lightly onto the runway of the Copenhagen airport.

"Yikes!" Ricky exclaimed, grinning broadly. "Here we are! We made it all the way across the ocean!"

When the plane finally stopped, the Hollisters unfastened their seat belts, collected their coats, and headed forward toward the exit.

Pam in her haste pushed past the bearded man and accidentally bumped into the fat briefcase he was carrying.

"Oh, I'm sorry," the girl said politely.

The man did not reply, but scowled at her. It was then that Pam noticed he had taken his right hand from his pocket and was wearing light yellow gloves.

The Hollisters bade the stewardess good-by as they passed her at the doorway. An officer at the foot of the mobile stairway directed them to the low, rambling customs building.

The five children skipped along beside their parents and entered the door of the customs building, where other passengers were already standing before a long counter.

As Mr. Hollister was about to show the Hollisters' passports, six policemen walked briskly into the building. "Attention!" announced one of the officers in a loud, commanding voice. "I regret to tell you," he stated, "but we must hold everyone for questioning!"

"Why?" Mr. Hollister asked in amazement.

The reply was quick and crisp. "There has been a theft from the New York plane—a mermaid figurine which belongs to the Queen is missing!"

## CHAPTER 2

### A SCOOTER ESCAPE

THE priceless Little Mermaid had been stolen from Miss Petersen! The Hollisters stared at one another in dismay. Then the police explained that somehow another mermaid had been put in its place.

"Crickets!" declared Pete. "We've been in Denmark only a few minutes and we're right in the middle of a mystery!"

The airplane passengers stood about, perplexed, while the police examined their baggage. "I regret this inconvenience to you, Madame," a policeman said to Mrs. Hollister as he inspected the family's luggage.

"Pete, maybe we can help the police," Pam whispered.

"Let's. Did you see anybody suspicious on the plane?"

"Not exactly suspicious," Pam responded. "But Mr. Bushyface——"

"Say, that's an idea!" Pete interrupted. "Didn't he examine the little mermaid last?"

"Yes, he did." Pam also said that the bearded man scowled when she had bumped into his briefcase.

"Maybe," Pete guessed, "the mermaid was inside his case, and he was afraid you'd break it."

Just then Miss Petersen walked past, her eyes red from weeping.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," Pam sympathized, touching the woman's arm.

"Me, too," Pete chimed in. "Perhaps we can help you. Please tell us what happened."

The Danish woman still held the small velvet case in her hands. She opened it and showed the children the substitute piece of porcelain which now lay within. Its shape resembled that of the missing mermaid. But anyone could easily see that it was a cheap imitation, the kind that would be sold at knickknack and souvenir shops.

Pam whispered to Miss Petersen her suspicion about the bearded man, who was standing near the end of the long counter by the street exit.

"Look," Pam said, "he doesn't have his briefcase now!"

"We should tell the police about this," Miss Petersen said, and quickly spoke to one of the officers in Danish.

The uniformed man nodded and hastened toward the bearded fellow. The children and their parents followed.

"Pardon me, sir," said the officer politely. "I'd like to ask you a few questions. First, what is your name?"

The man glanced at the youngsters with flashing

eyes, then looked straight at the policeman. "My name is Pancho Schwartz." He hesitated and again looked at the Hollisters. "What are these kids putting you up to? Why are you accusing me?"

"Nobody is accusing you," the officer declared. "An expensive porcelain figurine is missing, and we intend to find it. You saw it on the plane, didn't you?"

"Yes, of course."

"Did you take it?"

"Nonsense."

"Then you wouldn't mind being searched."

"If it will please the Hollisters, go ahead," was the gruff retort.

At this, Mr. Hollister stepped forward, his jaw set firmly. "I object to your rudeness, Mr. Schwartz," he said. "My children are only trying to aid the authorities. If innocent, you have nothing to fear."

"Bah!" exclaimed the bearded man as his pockets were searched. "You'll pay for this insult."

When nothing was found in his pockets, a look of evil triumph spread over Mr. Schwartz's face. His luggage also failed to reveal the missing mermaid.

The suspect began to look even more pleased with himself when the officer asked, "Where's your briefcase?"

"Briefcase?"

"Yes. The one you had on the plane."

The man spread his gloved hands toward the policeman in a gesture of innocence. "I had no briefcase."

"You did, too," Pam spoke up bravely. She told the officer how she had bumped into it while alighting from the airplane.

The man blanched and shouted, "She doesn't know what she's talking about!" Then suddenly he clutched at his chest. "I'm—I'm ill. I feel faint," Mr. Schwartz said hoarsely.

Pam and the officer rushed to his side and assisted him to a nearby bench. While the policeman loosened Mr. Schwartz's collar and tried to make him comfortable, Pete wondered about the missing briefcase. Instinctively, his eyes turned to the overseas airplane. What he saw caused him to shout an alarm.

A flat, brown object lay on the ground near the wheels of the airplane. "The briefcase!" Pete cried out. "That must be Mr. Schwartz's!"

One of the officers rushed to the boy's side just in time to see a strange man grab an airline's motor scooter parked outside the customs building. The man, thin and wiry, quickly drove onto the field, stopped beneath the wing of the airplane, picked up the briefcase, and fled on the scooter.

Pete ran out the door and sprinted toward the man on the scooter, which now sped across the airfield.

The policeman followed close behind the boy. "Stop," he ordered. "It's dangerous out there, with planes landing and taking off. Leave it to me. I'll get him."

Seeing what was happening, the other five policemen joined in the chase. One officer commandeered



*The man picked up the briefcase.*

a motorcycle, while the remainder piled into a police car and sped after the fugitive. The Hollisters watched them disappear across the field.

"I'm going to ask that Mr. Bushyface about this," Pete said, returning to the customs building. He looked about for the man, but he was nowhere to be seen!

"Where did he go?" Pete asked.

"He was lying here on the bench just a moment ago," Mrs. Hollister said.

"He must have run away when we were all looking out at the field," Ricky surmised.

"Oh, dear," Holly declared. "Now we won't be able to help Miss Petersen."

"We'll find that man yet," Ricky said with determination. "Didn't you say Denmark is a small country, Mother?"

Mrs. Hollister smiled and nodded as she helped her husband close their opened suitcases. She said that Denmark, by comparison with the United States, was a small country. "But there still are over four million people here," she added. "It might prove quite a task to find your Mr. Bushyface."

Their mother's words were a challenge to both Pete and Pam. The two children stood aside, comparing notes about the mysterious suspect. "If Mr. Schwartz kept his right hand in his pocket, and wore gloves while he was leaving the plane, perhaps he was hiding a scar," Pam reasoned.

"He was hiding something he didn't want people to see," Pete said. "That's for sure."

At that moment the policemen returned, looking very stern. The fugitive, they reported, had escaped by ditching his motor scooter, stealing a bicycle, and losing himself in the crowd on the road.

"He got away on a bike?" Holly asked, hardly able to believe the report.

"Yes," one of the officers declared, "and he was pretty smart to do just that."

The Hollister children now learned for the first time that there are many more bicycles in Denmark than cars. It would be harder to identify a person riding a bicycle than on any other conveyance.

"How many bikes in Copenhagen?" Pete asked.

He was told that there were about a million inhabitants in the city and that nearly every one of them owned a bicycle.

The police by now were convinced that Mr. Schwartz had taken the figurine, and they thanked the Hollisters for their help.

Then Mr. Hollister turned to his children and said, "Next stop, our hotel in Copenhagen."

"How will we get there, Daddy?" asked Sue.

"Follow me, and I'll show you," her father replied with a grin.

They hurried outside the customs building and at the curb found their luggage stacked neatly beside a small station wagon.

"Another miniature," Pete said, laughing.

"It's the biggest one I could rent," Mr. Hollister replied, "but I think we can all squeeze in."

After an attendant helped Pete and his father tie the luggage to the roof rack, Mr. Hollister drove from the airport toward the great capital city of Copenhagen.

All along the way swarms of bicyclists pedaled in both directions.

"One has to be very careful driving over here," Mrs. Hollister remarked. Then she added quickly, "Oh, goodness! Just look!"

The children's mother pointed to a large field where tulips were in bloom.

"A royal carpet of flowers!" Pam declared poetically. "Oh, Daddy, can't we stop to see them?"

"Here's where we begin our sight-seeing," her father replied as he pulled off to the side of the road and parked the car. Enchanted, they gazed over the acres of red tulips which swayed like little wavelets in the light breeze.

The Hollisters had always associated tulips with the country of Holland, which made them doubly surprised to see such an extensive field of the flowers in Denmark.

"Holland isn't far away," Mrs. Hollister reminded them. "Tulips probably grow very well in all of these surrounding countries."

While the others admired the flowers, Sue's attention was caught by a single giant bloom growing on the other side of the road.

“Oh, I’d like to pick it for Mommy,” the little girl said to herself.

Sue glanced up and down the road. To her left, a group of cyclists came whizzing in her direction. Sue thought that if she ran quickly she would have ample time to cross the road.

She darted out. But by the time she got to the middle of the road, Sue was stricken with fear. The bicycle riders were going much faster than she had thought. Now they came bearing down upon her. Sue felt trapped. Should she run all the way across the road or turn back?

## CHAPTER 3

### *RICKY GETS A BUMP*

CONFUSED by the onrushing bicycles, Sue did not know which way to turn.

"Help! Daddy!" she screamed. But when the others whirled about, it was too late to help her. The bicycle riders were swerving this way and that in an effort to avoid running into the frightened child.

Then suddenly a slender, athletic-looking young woman on a red bicycle leaned over and scooped Sue up in the crook of her right arm.

"Oops!" cried Sue. The cyclist pulled to the side of the road and dropped Sue into her mother's arms like a limp rag doll. Tears came to the little girl's eyes, and she cried and laughed at the same time. "I wanted to pick Mommy a flower," she said, "but those bikes wouldn't let me."

Her rescuer laughed gaily and brushed a wisp of blond hair from her forehead. "You're a dear for wanting to please Mommy."

Mr. and Mrs. Hollister thanked the girl rider, who said her name was Karen Clausen. "My friends call me Karen, and you may, too. I'm happy to be of assistance to visiting Americans."

Pam thought that the lovely Danish girl was about

twenty years old. Karen had pretty white teeth, a turned-up nose, and blue eyes. Her straight hair was pulled back into a neat bun, held together by several gold-colored hairpins.

When Sue's tears dried, she squirmed from her mother's arms, ran over to Karen, and threw her arms about the young woman. "I love you," Sue declared, looking up into Karen's face. "Let's be friends."

"Of course, dear," Karen said, bending down.

"And would you do me another favor?"

"Yes. What is it?"

"Please help me pick that flower."

All the Hollisters chuckled as Karen took Sue by the hand and led her across the road. Sue plucked the stray tulip and proudly presented the bloom to her mother.

"Let's go to the hotel," Ricky squirmed impatiently. He hopped back into the car.

But Sue lingered beside Karen. "I want you to come with us," she entreated.

"You sweet little girl. I can't—I'm on my way home. But I have a better idea. Why don't you all stop at my house for a glass of milk and see the funny trolls? Just follow me."

After one look at the pleading eyes of their three girls, Mr. and Mrs. Hollister said yes.

"I have a secret to show the boys, too," Karen promised as she picked up her bicycle and pedaled off. Mr. Hollister followed at a safe distance, until Karen turned to the right into a long, straight lane.

"Yikes, where is she going?" Ricky exclaimed. "All I can see up ahead is water!"

Pete was wondering about the secret Karen had promised when they suddenly turned the corner at a cluster of trees. Before them, near the shore front, stood a neat red cottage with white shutters and a thatched roof. Low green shrubs flanked the doorway. At the corners of the house and from behind each bush peeked a carved wooden troll.

"Look! Snow White's dwarfs!" Holly exclaimed as Karen dismounted from her bicycle. When the Hollisters stepped out of the car, Karen explained that this was the home of her grandfather, or *Farfar* in Danish, and grandmother, or *Farmor*.

"*Farfar* is a retired sea captain," Karen commented. "He carves the trolls as a hobby and makes miniature boats, too."

Ricky clamored to see *Farfar* right away, but was told he was not at home.

"But *Farmor* is," Karen said. "Come in, and I'll introduce you."

When the Hollisters entered the quaint living room, an attractive, silvery-haired woman rose from a chair where she had been knitting and greeted her callers.

"*Farmor*," Karen said, "this is the Hollister family from America." She told her grandmother how they had met.

*Farmor* spoke English, too, but not as well as her granddaughter.

“Karen likes Americans,” *Farmor* smiled as she shook hands with each one of the visitors. “*Ja*, you are lighthearted like us Danes.” Then, with a wink at Mrs. Hollister, she added, “Besides, Karen likes to practice speaking English—or should I say American—with visitors.”

Mrs. Clausen asked her guests to be seated, and walked briskly into the kitchen, with Karen following. A few minutes later she returned with a tray of Danish pastry. Karen brought in glasses of milk for the children and hot tea for the grownups.

“What delicious pastry!” Mrs. Hollister said. “Did you make it yourself?” she inquired of Karen’s grandmother.

“*Ja*,” the woman responded. “This is *wienerbrod* and takes three days to prepare.”

*Farmor* Clausen sipped her tea and remarked, “Sue nearly had an accident? You must be very careful of bicycles in Denmark.”

“Yes,” Karen agreed. “You are safest when riding on one.”

“That is what we intend to do,” Mr. Hollister asserted. “We thought it would be an excellent way to see Copenhagen.”

“I know you’ll love it,” Karen went on. “There are so many interesting things to see. You’ve heard about Tivoli?”

“Oh, yes,” Pam said. “A lady on the plane told us about it.”

"At night," *Farmor* added, "Tivoli is most beautiful."

Pete and Ricky had finished their milk and pastry. "May we go outside and look around?" Pete asked, excusing himself.

"Ja, ja," replied *Farmor*.

Ricky also excused himself, and the two boys hurried outside. "Yikes!" Ricky said. "This place is super, Pete." They wandered to the back of the property, which ended in a long stone wall along the water front.

"I guess this is a canal which leads out to the bay," Pete surmised.

"Do you think the Clausens have a boat?" Ricky asked. The boys looked about, but there was none in sight.

As they turned around to make their way back to the house, Pete suddenly spied a ladder extending from the ground to the edge of the thatched roof.

"Look up there," he said, pointing to a fresh patch of thatch. "I guess *Farfar* was repairing it."

A mischievous light came into Ricky's eyes. "I've got it!" Ricky snapped his fingers. "Let's climb up on the roof. I'll bet the view is dandy from there."

"I don't know about that," Pete said cautiously. "Maybe the Clausens wouldn't like it."

"Yikes! I'm not big enough to hurt the thatch," Ricky argued.

Still dubious about his brother's adventure, Pete

watched Ricky scramble up the ladder like a monkey. "See! It's easy," he called down.

On hands and knees, Ricky worked his way up the steeply sloping roof. The thatch, made of marsh grasses, was slippery. But by flattening himself against it and inching upward, Ricky soon gained a perch atop the peak of the roof.

"What can you see?" Pete called up to his brother.

"Sailboats," Ricky reported. "A real speedy one is heading toward the canal. "Maybe it'll come right past here."

Having seen all he could, Ricky started to descend the sloping roof. But halfway down he began to slip. The frightened boy tried to stretch himself out against the thatch, but he slid even faster.

"Help, Pete!" But there was nothing his brother could do to stop him. Ricky reached the edge of the roof and hurtled through the air.

Pete raced over to catch him.

*Crash!* "Ow!" Both boys fell to the ground in a tangle of arms and legs. They lay still for a moment on the grassy lawn. Mr. Hollister, having heard the commotion, raced out of the house and helped his sons up.

Pete, the wind knocked out of him, spoke in gasps. "Ricky—slid down the—roof."

"Daddy, I banged my head. Ow! It hurts!" Ricky moaned as he rubbed a welt rising on his forehead.

By now the others had gathered around the two



*Halfway down he began to slip.*

boys, and *Farmor* took Ricky by the hand. "Come inside. I take care of your bump."

Ricky threw back his shoulders and, feeling somewhat like a hero, followed *Farmor* into the house. She led him to the kitchen, where she took some ice from her refrigerator. Putting this into a cloth, she pressed it against his forehead, and the bump began to subside.

"Ricky, you were naughty to climb onto the roof," Mrs. Hollister chided her son.

"I'm sorry, Mother." Ricky looked up at *Farmor* and grinned. "It was a swell slide while it lasted."

"Goodness," Mrs. Hollister declared. "I'm glad we didn't start our visit to Denmark with any broken bones."

With a wink at contrite Ricky, Karen said, "Now how would you all like to see a model boat that *Farfar* is making?"

"Keen!" Pete declared.

The girls, too, were eager, and the Hollisters followed Karen down a hall which led to *Farfar's* den. She opened the door. Along the wall on one side was a low workbench and on it stood an exquisite model of a sailing ship.

"Oh, it looks so real!" Holly said, surprised, as they stepped inside.

"It's nearly finished except for some of the rigging," Karen explained.

Connected to the three masts of the model ship were spars and fittings made exactly to scale.

"It sure is a beauty," Pete remarked. "Is *Farfar* making it for one of his grandchildren?"

"No," Karen said. "*Farfar* will give it to a church."

"A church?" Pam asked, astonished. "I never saw a ship in a church!"

Karen told the Hollisters that the model ship would be presented to the church in memory of the seamen with whom *Farfar* had sailed in bygone days.

"That's a nice custom," Pam said. "Please tell us more about it."

Karen explained that in Denmark these models were called *kirkeskibe* and that in some other countries in southern Europe they were called "votive" ship models. They were made as offerings by seamen who, in time of peril, had promised a model of their ship to their church, should they be saved.

"They are true gifts," *Farmor* said, "because they are handmade by the donors."

"The ships are usually hung from the ceilings of the church," Karen went on as the children admired the glistening hull of the model before them.

"And do they stay there forever?" Holly wanted to know.

She was told that most of the ship models were taken down for inspection at intervals of a few years.

"What a swell place to hide a treasure!" Pete said to himself. He asked if anything were stored inside the holds of the *kirkeskibe*.

"Goodness," said Karen with a chuckle. "You talk like a detective, Pete. And you are right, too."

She told him that in the holds of most of the models were the ship's papers, giving information about the donor, together with other data. Sometimes these papers, she said, were beautifully handwritten on parchment. They were usually placed in metal or glass containers.

Then Karen added with a smile, "My little children are always interested in the church ships."

Pam looked up, startled. "Your children? Are you married?"

The young woman tossed back her head and laughed. "Oh, no," she said. "I mean the children in my kindergarten class. You see, I am a kindergarten mistress."

As the others laughed, too, Karen told them that her school was not in session during the summer months. "I have many four-year-olds like Sue," she went on, looking about for the little girl. Sue had wandered to a window and was gazing out, her eyes as wide as saucers.

"Oh, look!" she cried. "Here comes Mr. Bushy-face!"

## CHAPTER 4

### SLIPPERY SMORREBROD!

EVERYONE was startled by Sue's outburst. The Hollisters were astounded. What was Mr. Bushyface doing here?

Karen glanced out the window, too, and said with a chuckle, "Oh, *Farfar* is coming. I guess his beard is quite a bushy one, Sue. See, he has just tied up his sailboat. Come, let us meet him."

Karen led the five children out of doors and toward the water front, where a beautiful sailboat was moored. Ricky recognized it immediately as the one he had seen heading swiftly into the canal.

But their attention was quickly drawn to the elderly man who approached them with a lively step.

"*Farfar!*" Karen called out. "I have some new American friends."

The man's thick beard was white, not black like Mr. Schwartz's. *Farfar* wore a flannel shirt open at the neck, and on his head was a jaunty yachting cap. His eyes were china blue and crinkled with laughter lines.

"*Du store Kineser!*" he cried out as he shook hands with Pete. "What fine-looking children."

Holly wrinkled her nose at the queer-sounding expression and wanted to know what it meant. But she held back her question until after Karen introduced all the youngsters to her grandfather. Then the pig-tailed girl hunched her shoulders and giggled. "*Farfar*," she said, "I know what a store is, but what's a *Kineser*?"

The old seaman put his hands on his hips and laughed loudly. "*Du store Kineser*—that's an old Danish expression," he said. "It means, 'You big Chinaman.'"

"In English," Karen explained, "it would be like saying 'By George.'"

"We're learning Danish already," Pam declared as they all walked back into the house. There *Farfar* was introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Hollister.

"Have you shown them my ship model?" *Farfar* asked.

"Oh, yes, and it's a beaut," Pete responded.

"How do you make such tiny parts for the model?" Mrs. Hollister inquired.

"Come, I'll show you." *Farfar* led them into his den, where he picked up a sharp knife from his workbench and began to whittle a tiny spar.

Instinctively, Pete reached into his pocket for his prize knife. Perhaps he could learn some expert whittling, too.

As Pete felt around in his pocket, a strange look came over his face. The knife was not there. Quickly

he searched his other pockets. The ivory knife was gone!

"Mother! Dad!" Pete cried. "My knife is missing."

"Gracious!" Mrs. Hollister exclaimed. "Did you drop it?"

"No," Pete said. Then a sudden thought struck him. "I wonder if Mr. Schwartz took it. Remember, he looked at my knife on the plane."

"Who is Mr. Schwartz?" *Farfar* asked, putting down the piece of wood he was whittling.

Pete now told the Clausens about the incidents on the plane and at the airport, and the suspected thief whom they had nicknamed Mr. Bushyface.

"Now we have all the more reason to find that fellow!" Pete said hotly.

"That will be quite a task," the old sea captain declared. "There are hundreds of men in Copenhagen who wear black beards."

"Whew!" Holly said. "Beards and bicycles! What a mystery!"

"Well, we must be on our way," Mrs. Hollister said, and thanked the Clausens for their hospitality.

"You must come back again and see us," *Farmor* declared as they left the pleasant house. "*Farfar* may give you a ride in his sailboat."

Mr. Hollister declared they would try to find time in their busy schedule and Pam said, "I'd love to meet some Danish children, Karen."

"Perhaps that can be arranged, too," said the kindergarten mistress. She told them that her brother

Eric, an airplane pilot who lived in a nearby village, had ten-year-old twins named Nils and Astrid.

"They will come to Copenhagen with some other village children tomorrow," Karen said. "Groups of Danish children often visit the capital on sight-seeing trips."

"Oh, goody!" Holly declared. "Can we meet them?"

"Ja," *Farmor* replied. "Maybe you all go to Tivoli together tomorrow night."

The prospect of such a wonderful trip with Danish children made all the Hollisters smile. Even Pete forgot about his missing knife for the moment.

After Mrs. Hollister had given Karen the address of their hotel, the family said good-by and set off once again toward the city.

Their hotel proved to be a modern building, with all the comforts they had known in Shoreham. A smiling blond bellboy with a round hat trimmed in red and blue ushered them to their suite of rooms on the third floor.

"He's not much older than I am," Pete whispered to Pam as the boy carried the suitcases in from the hall.

The bellboy, overhearing Pete, smiled and said in perfect English, "I'm fourteen. How old are you?"

Pete was taken aback. "I'm twelve," he said with a grin.

"I hope you like our city," the bellboy said, bowing.

As was usually the case when the Hollisters traveled together, the three girls occupied one room, Pete and Ricky had another, and their parents shared the third. All three bedrooms were arranged around the comfortable living room, which the family had entered first.

Once unpacked, the youngsters were eager to explore Copenhagen.

"Let's take a walk before dinner, Mother," Pam suggested when her parents were ready.

Five minutes later they walked from their hotel, a brick and stone building facing on a wide street. In the middle of the avenue was a lovely green strip of park lined with trees and brightened with patches of colorful flowers.

"This is like a fairyland city," Holly declared as she and the other children strolled along in front of their parents.

Pete had brought a map of the city, which he studied as they ambled through the park.

"Look, Dad," Pete said, showing his father the map. "There's a famous restaurant up ahead here."

He had hardly mentioned this when Ricky discovered the place, too. On the left side of the street was a gray stone building with an open-air restaurant extending right out to the sidewalk.

"Yummy!" Holly rejoiced. "I'm so hungry!"

"Me, too," Sue piped up.

"I guess we all are," Mr. Hollister agreed.

"May we eat outside," Ricky asked, "where we can watch people going by?"

"That must be the custom here," Pam mentioned. "I think it would be fun."

Mr. and Mrs. Hollister smiled their assent and Ricky was the first one to reach the gate leading into the restaurant from the sidewalk. He waited until his mother and father had passed through first, then followed with his sisters and brother. A waiter ushered them to a table adjacent to the sidewalk.

"This is funny!" Sue giggled.

"Yikes! Look at these!" Ricky declared as their waiter handed them the largest menus they had ever seen.

"Would you like a *smorrebrod*?" the waiter asked.

"What's that?" asked Pete.

The waiter explained that it was an open-faced sandwich.

"Without any bread on top?" queried Holly, looking up.

"That's right," replied the waiter. "And they're quite a meal, too, if you've never had a Danish sandwich." He indicated the long list on the menu.

"Crickets!" Pete declared. "There must be over a hundred sandwiches to choose from."

"Two hundred," corrected the waiter. He said he would serve them a variety of *smorrebrod* with meat, fish, cheese, and salad.

When the single-decker sandwiches arrived, Mrs. Hollister said they looked as open and friendly as the

Danes themselves. But it was obvious that *smorrebrod* could not be picked up and eaten American-style. Glancing around, they watched what other folk were doing at nearby tables.

"They're eating the sandwiches with knives and forks," Pam observed.

"Yes, but they're doing it awfully funny," remarked Holly.

The other diners ate holding the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. But when a morsel of food was cut, the person lifted it directly to his mouth with his left hand.

"That's the European style of eating," Mrs. Hollister told her children.

"Let's try it," Pam suggested.

Holly soon tired of cutting her *smorrebrod*. "Oh, dear," she sighed as she tried to slice through the hearty sandwich, "I wish I could pick this up. It's—oops!"

The sandwich slid off Holly's plate, flew over the table, and landed in her father's lap!

Pete and Ricky laughed until Mrs. Hollister scolded them.

"Oh, Daddy, I'm so sorry!" the little girl wailed, embarrassed.

"No harm done, Holly," Mr. Hollister said. The sandwich had landed in his napkin, and he returned it to Holly's plate.

Now she was more careful, and everyone finished eating in continental style.



*The sandwich landed in her father's lap.*

After their first Danish meal, the Hollisters returned to the hotel. Although in this northern city it was not yet dark, they soon retired. All the youngsters were ready for a refreshing sleep, for, as Pete remarked, not many people had put in such a full day, especially after a long flight over the ocean.

At breakfast next morning Mr. Hollister announced the adventure for the day. The family was to take a boat trip, starting on one of Copenhagen's canals and going out into the harbor where they would see the Little Mermaid statue.

The pier where they were to board the sight-seeing boat was within walking distance of their hotel. At the dock was the strangest looking craft the Hollisters had ever seen. It was a long, wide boat with a glass-canopied roof, and it could hold dozens of passengers.

Some sight-seers were already inside the boat, while others were stepping down into it from the stone edge of the canal.

As Pam found a seat on a long bench with the rest of her family, a stout little woman seated in front of her turned and smiled.

"Oh, hello there. You're the children who were on the airplane!"

"Yes, we were," Pam said politely. "But I didn't see you."

"Probably not. My seat was in the back," she said.

The woman introduced herself as Mrs. Windrow

and soon was chatting amiably with the rest of the Hollister family.

"And did you see that terrible man with the beard at the customs house?" Mrs. Windrow asked.

"We think he stole the little figurine," Pam remarked, "and my brother Pete's penknife, too."

"He seemed to vanish as if by magic," Mrs. Hollister commented.

"Oh, no, he didn't," declared Mrs. Windrow.

"What do you mean?"

"I saw him get away," Mrs. Windrow said, shaking her head and narrowing her eyes to slits.

"You did?" Pete asked, surprised. "Why didn't you tell the police?"

"I—I was just too nervous and frightened," Mrs. Windrow admitted, somewhat ashamed.

Sue turned to the woman and said seriously, "Don't you be afraid, Mrs. Window. We won't let anybody hurt you."

"My name is Windrow, dear," the woman said, then told how Mr. Schwartz had slipped out of the customs door. "A car was waiting for him, too," she added. "He got away in it."

"Did he drive by himself, Mrs. Windrow?" Pete asked.

"No," the woman said, "another man was at the wheel."

As Pete and Pam made mental notes of the clue, the sight-seeing boat started up with a throaty purr and glided along the Copenhagen canal.

Soon they were in the harbor, passing great docks on which tall steel cranes lifted cargo from the holds of freighters moored alongside.

As the harbor widened, the waters became rougher. In a few minutes the sight-seeing boat was dipping in the trough of large waves.

“Oh! Oh!” cried Mrs. Windrow, alarmed. “This is awful. We might capsize!”

## CHAPTER 5

### A COTTON-CANDY FACE

THE dipping and swaying of the boat did not bother the children. "I'm on a roller coaster!" Holly shouted.

This made Mrs. Windrow feel even worse. "Oh! Oh!" she groaned. "I'm going to be seasick!"

Noticing her distress, the tour guide told Mrs. Windrow they would soon be in sheltered waters again. Then, as the boat rounded a point of land, the waves became smaller, and soon the sight-seers were headed up another finger of Copenhagen harbor.

In a few minutes the boat slowed down, then pulled up beside a pretty little park, and everybody got out.

"Is the mermaid nearby?" Holly asked, walking up to the guide.

"Yes," he replied. "She's right over there." A few feet offshore and seated on a large rock was the statue of the Little Mermaid.

Pam raced on ahead, with the others following. "Oh, isn't she beautiful!"

The Little Mermaid sat serenely looking over the harbor as she had done for many years. As the Hollisters admired her, four buses pulled up alongside a road

in the park. The doors opened and a flood of children poured out and ran toward the Little Mermaid. Most of them wore the colorful costumes of their native land.

As the Hollisters watched with fascination, two Danish children approached the tourists shyly. The boy was dressed in green stockings; yellow knee pants; a long vest in candy-striped colors of yellow, red, and green; and a knee-length brown coat.

The pretty blond girl with him wore an ankle-length purple dress with a tight bodice, a yellow neckerchief, and a white apron striped with yellow. On her head was a white cap tied in back with a purple bow.

The family turned their attention from the Little Mermaid to admire the two children in their costumes.

"I wonder if they understand English," Holly whispered to Ricky.

Hearing them, the two Danish children brightened. The boy grinned broadly. "Are you the Hollisters?" he asked.

For a moment the visitors were too surprised to reply. Pam was first to answer. "Why, yes, we are," she said. "How did you know?"

"I'm Nils Clausen and this is my twin sister, Astrid," the boy announced. He bent forward at the waist in a little bow and shook hands with Pete, Ricky, and Mr. Hollister.

Astrid smiled and added, "Aunt Karen told us

about you. When Nils and I saw American sight-seers with five children, well——”

“Your costumes are lovely,” Mrs. Hollister remarked. She turned to her husband. “Why don’t you take their pictures, dear?”

Mr. Hollister took several snapshots. When he had finished, Holly said impishly, “I wish I could have my picture taken in a Danish costume.”

“I think we can arrange that for all of you,” Astrid offered. She glanced about at the throng of Danish children until she spied several who were the sizes of Sue, Ricky, and Holly. Astrid spoke to them, and they nodded in agreement.

“Come this way!” Nils said, beckoning to the Hollisters. He led them to the parked buses. “Let the girls use the first bus and we’ll take the second one,” he suggested.

Astrid, Pam, Holly, and Sue, along with two other little Danish girls, entered the first bus. They walked to the rear and, bending low so that they could not be seen, started to exchange outfits.

Meanwhile, in the bus behind, Pete and Ricky did the same. Pete wore Nils’ outfit, while Ricky exchanged with a young Danish lad his own size.

Now all the Happy Hollisters were dressed in Danish costumes. “Come on,” their father called. “Let’s take those pictures.” He led them to the Little Mermaid. Several Danish boys and girls were already climbing about the statue.

“Hey, why don’t we do that, too?” Ricky sug-

gested, instantly starting toward the Little Mermaid.

"Goody!" Holly declared. She scrambled to the topmost boulder and put her ear to the Little Mermaid's mouth as if expecting the mermaid to tell her a secret.

Ricky flattened himself against the rock and, with both hands, pushed against his sister's back so that she would not fall into the harbor.

Pete stood on one of the lower boulders, looking up and laughing, while Pam led Sue to the base of the bronze statue.

"Careful, Sue," Pam cautioned as she helped the little girl from a small rock onto a large boulder. Sue nimbly jumped across. But Pam, intent upon watching, stepped on a slippery part of the boulder. Before Pam could catch her balance, her right leg slipped into the water, and her foot jammed between two rocks.

"Ouch!" she yelled.

Instantly Pete sprang to her side. Leaning over, he pulled his sister out of the water.

"Are you all right?" Mrs. Hollister called.

Pam replied that her ankle hurt.

"I'll help you," Pete offered. Holding Pam by the hand, Pete stepped onto a small rock, then back to the shore. Pam followed, limping.

"Yikes!" Ricky cried out. "Now we can't have our pictures taken together."

"Daddy's snapped them already," Mrs. Hollister said, smiling.

"Righto. Even Pam standing in the water!" Mr. Hollister added as he bent down to examine his daughter's ankle. "It looks as if you just strained it a bit," he stated, and quickly bandaged the ankle with his handkerchief.

"Thanks, Daddy," said Pam, limping a little. "It feels much better."

By the time the Hollister children exchanged the Danish clothes for their own, Pam's shoes and socks were fairly dry and she was able to walk quite well.

"All aboard! All aboard!" the sight-seeing guide called out, and the tourists hurried to the boat. The Hollisters, lingering to say good-by to their new friends, were the last in.

"Aunt Karen said we might all go to Tivoli together," Astrid called from the pier.

"That will be fine," Mrs. Hollister replied. "Will you meet us at our hotel after supper?"

"Ja, ja. Good-by." The twins waved until the boat was out of sight.

On the ride back through the Copenhagen canal, the Hollisters looked carefully at every bearded man they saw. It seemed to Pam as if half the male population of Copenhagen wore beards of various shapes and sizes. But none of the men resembled the one they sought.

"We'll be lucky if we ever see that Mr. Bushyface again," Pete remarked wryly.

"We've gotten some good clues in our detective

work so far," Pam encouraged him. "We must keep trying, Pete."

Early that evening Nils and Astrid met the Hollisters at the hotel. This time the Danish children were dressed in their regular clothes, explaining that they had changed at *Farfar's* home.

"Tell us more about Tivoli," Pam begged Astrid as they sat side by side on a sofa in the lobby.

"It's an amusement park and a garden combined," Astrid declared, her eyes alight with enthusiasm, "and covers a whole city block right in the heart of Copenhagen."

"It used to be an old fort," Nils declared, speaking slowly and distinctly.

"Yikes! " Ricky whooped. "Are there any cannons there now?"

Nils told him that Tivoli Gardens no longer resembled a fort. The only thing left of the old ramparts, he said, was the moat, which was now used as a lake for boating.

While talking together in the lobby, they were all surprised to see Karen walk in. "I thought you'd need some help with these rascals tonight," she told Mrs. Hollister. "I'm used to looking after boys and girls. Why not let me take them to Tivoli."

"Can you manage all of them?"

"Of course," Karen replied.

"We'll be good," Ricky promised.

As the children's parents had some letters to write, they accepted Karen's kind offer.

Sue had to stay home because it was near her bedtime. At first she objected, her round little chin quivering as if she was about to burst into tears.

"Don't fret, dear," her mother consoled her. "We'll all go to Tivoli together in the daytime."

Karen smiled and reached into her handbag. "Here," she said. "You may go to sleep tonight with a new toy." She pulled out a small doll dressed in a Danish outfit similar to the one Sue had worn that afternoon.

"Oh, thank you," Sue said, the dimples returning to her cheeks.

"What are you going to name her?" Pam asked.

"Sneezer," declared Sue proudly.

"What?" Nils asked.

"Sneezer," Sue repeated. "Just like the funny thing that *Farfar* said."

Everyone laughed at once, recalling the old sea captain's expression "*Du store Kineser*."

Sue looked up into her mother's face. "Come on, Mommie. Sneezer is tired. It's time she went to bed."

Mrs. Hollister winked at Karen. "You're in charge of the little troop."

Saying good-by to their parents, the Hollisters gaily set off in a taxi with Karen, Nils, and Astrid.

When they reached the high arched gate of Tivoli, the visitors tingled with excitement. They could hear music and laughter from inside as they pushed through the gate with a throng of other children.

"Oh, it's beautiful!" Pam exclaimed, looking about



*"Oh, it's beautiful!" Pam exclaimed.*

in utter disbelief. Everything seemed to be going on at once. To the left was a pantomime show. On the high stage merry Pierrot was playing tricks on Harlequin and Columbine. From the distance came the gay sounds of a merry-go-round and the whizzing noise of a roller coaster.

"Look, there's a Ferris wheel, too!" Ricky cried, pointing.

High above a row of trees along the garden path was the Ferris wheel. Its gondolas seated four people, and above each basket was a huge, gaily-colored balloon about ten feet tall.

"Let's go for a ride on the *switchback*," Nils suggested.

"*Switchback*? What's that?"

Astrid laughed. "The coastly roller."

"No," said Nils. "Roller coaster."

"And the merry-go-round we call a *roundabout*," Karen said.

As they walked along with the jolly throng, Holly suddenly exclaimed: "Look! Cotton candy! Let's get some." She ran to a booth where a man was selling the pink fluffy confection. Each of the youngsters and Karen, too, bought some.

"Isn't this good!" Holly said as the candy quickly melted in her mouth. But at that moment Ricky bumped his sister's hand, and the cotton candy was spread all over her face.

Holly did not think it was an accident. "Oh, Ricky, you meanie!" she cried.

"I didn't mean to push so hard," he said, scampering away. Pete leaped forward a few steps and caught his brother by the collar. "Come back here," he ordered, "and apologize."

Sheepishly, Ricky did this, while Karen wiped the pink fluff from Holly's face with her handkerchief.

To make sure that the two got into no more mischief, Karen held Holly and Ricky by the hand as they continued walking through the park.

Soon they came to a great open-air stage around which hundreds of people had gathered. They were all looking up at four acrobats riding bicycles along a high wire.

Ricky and Holly were especially intrigued by the stunt. The others, after looking at it for a while, asked Karen if they might ride the Ferris wheel.

"All right," she assented. "I'll go on with Ricky and Holly. We'll meet you later by the *roundabout*."

"Crickets! This is keen!" Pete declared as the four children paid their admission and climbed into one of the gondolas.

After all the passengers were aboard, the Ferris wheel began to turn. Soon Pete, Pam, Nils and Astrid had reached the top. All of the beautiful park lay below them.

"It's like a fairyland!" Pam cried out, looking at the swirl of color and motion as their gondola started down. Then suddenly she grasped her brother's arm. "Look, Pete!" She pointed. Standing beside a lamp-

post was a man with a beard. He held a package in his hands. "That's Mr. Bushyface!"

"It sure looks like him!"

"Oh, dear!" Pam wailed. "He may be gone by the time the Ferris wheel stops!"

Quickly she and Pete explained to the surprised twins why they were so anxious to overtake the bearded man.

The companions craned their necks as the gondola dipped down, then ascended again. The bearded man had not moved, seeming content to glance about at the fun-loving crowds.

"If the wheel would only stop!" Pam wished. Finally, after what seemed like hours, the Ferris wheel slowed and began releasing its passengers.

"*Please*," Pam thought to herself. "Please don't go away, Mr. Bushyface. We must catch you."

"He's still there," Nils noticed as the Ferris wheel came to a stop, and the four youngsters hopped out of their gondola.

By this time, however, the suspect was shielded from their sight by tall shrubbery. They hastened to the place where they had seen the bearded man.

He had vanished!

"How awful!" Pam moaned.

"Bad luck!" Pete said, discouraged. "Just when we thought we had him."

"Where could he have gone?" Pam sighed.

The children looked about. The only man nearby was seated on a green park bench, but he was clean-

shaven. Pete's eyes lingered on the fellow for a moment. The man was about to open an envelope with an ivory penknife. Pete edged closer as the man snapped open the blade and slit the envelope. The boy caught his breath. On one side of the knife was a collie dog embossed in gold.

"It's—it's my knife!" Pete cried to himself.

## CHAPTER 6

### A STRANGE TATTOO

As THE man returned the ivory penknife to his pocket, Pete saw something that made him jump. The man had a flag tattoo on his right hand! Two thoughts raced through the boy's mind. How had this fellow come into possession of Pete's gift? And was the tattoo the mark of Schwartz's gang?

Pete looked about for help. Pam, Nils, and Astrid had wandered on along the path looking for the bearded man. If he called to them, Pete feared he might arouse the suspicion of the stranger.

His heart pounding, Pete glanced in the other direction. There he saw a policeman, his back turned, standing beside a fountain. The boy hastened toward the officer.

"Would you help me, sir? A has man stolen my penknife."

When the uniformed man turned around, Pete's jaw dropped! The "officer's" face was dabbed with red, green, and white grease paint.

"You're—you're only a Tivoli clown?" Pete stammered.

The clown nodded, grinned, shrugged, and shuffled off.

“Crickets! I would pick a clown,” Pete chided himself. “And one who doesn’t speak English!”

Pete quickly decided to confront the man himself and ask for his knife. But when he returned to the bench, the fellow had risen and, with long strides, was making his way through the crowds.

“Wait!” Pete yelled and ran after him. Pam, Nils, and Astrid heard his cries.

“What’s the matter?” Pam inquired. “Have you found Mr. Bushyface?”

“No, but I did find the fellow who has my pen-knife.”

“Where?” Nils asked.

“Follow me!”

In the lead, the boy threaded his way through the throngs of happy, strolling Danes. Now and then he caught sight of the man, dodging quickly among the crowd.

Suddenly a miniature train, pulling a string of cars loaded with sight-seers, crossed in front of Pete. He dashed around the end of it. However, his quarry was out of sight.

Added to Pete’s difficulty was the fact that it was now growing dark. Like twinkling stars of many colors, lights began to appear all over Tivoli.

“I guess we’ve lost him,” Pete said finally.

Turning to Pam, Nils, and Astrid, he said, “Come on, let’s go back to the bench where the fellow sat. Perhaps we can find another clue.”

They returned to find a young couple seated on

the bench holding hands. Embarrassed, Pete and Pam glanced about shyly. Smiling, the young woman spoke to them in Danish. "Did you lose something?"

Astrid answered in English so her friends could understand. "No, we didn't lose anything, thank you. Our American friends are looking for a clue that may be on this bench."

"Then you are detectives?" the young man questioned the Hollisters.

"We like to solve mysteries," Pete declared.

Hearing this, the amused young couple stood up. *There on the bench lay a white envelope.*

"Look at this!" Nils shouted as he picked up the paper. The children saw that it was not a complete envelope, only the back half. And on it was written the word *Madagascar*.

After thanking the young couple for their cooperation, the four youngsters went on their way, still examining the bit of paper.

"Madagascar? Isn't that an island off the east coast of Africa?" Nils asked.

"Yes," Pete answered him. "We studied that in school last year."

"But what does it mean?" Astrid pondered.

"I don't know," said Pete, "but I think we should take this piece of envelope to the police."

"I know where the station house is," Nils volunteered, explaining that it was not far from the entrance to the park.

First the young sleuths found Karen, Ricky, and



*"Look at this!" Nils shouted.*

Holly, who were still having a rollicking time on the *roundabout*. Between rides, Pete told Karen where they were going.

"We'll go along," she said, and told Holly and Ricky of the new adventure. Excited, they all hurried off to police headquarters.

It was agreed that Nils would do the talking, while Astrid interpreted for the Hollisters. Approaching the main desk, the Danish boy spoke to the lieutenant in charge.

"You say your American friends are trying to solve a mystery?" the officer asked, astonished.

"Yes, and they've found some good clues," Nils told him. He related everything that had happened thus far and then showed the bit of envelope to the lieutenant.

"Hmm, Madagascar," the policeman repeated. "That's odd. I can't make anything out of this. But the tattoo on the man's right hand——"

The lieutenant reached into a drawer and pulled out several sheets of paper. He thumbed through them until he came to what he was looking for. As the officer spoke rapidly in Danish, Astrid translated every sentence to the Hollisters.

The lieutenant told them that there had been a series of thefts in Copenhagen in recent days. The criminal was taking rare objects of artistic value.

"We're sure this fellow is not a Dane," the man asserted. "We believe he belongs to an international ring of thieves. But we don't know much about him

except that he has a foreign flag tattooed on his right hand."

He added that the police were on the lookout for the gang. "And I hope," he said to Pete, "that we shall be able to recover your penknife."

The children thanked the lieutenant, then left the building to hurry back to Tivoli. Just as they passed through the entrance, a great *boom* reverberated high over the park. Its suddenness caused Pam to jump.

"What was that?"

"Maybe there's a cannon in the old fortress after all," said Ricky, glancing into the sky. Then he exclaimed, "Ohhh! Look!"

High above, a giant fireworks display burst into a myriad of colors, and silvery stars cascaded down.

"Crickets!" Pete cried out. "It's like the Fourth of July!"

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* The sky was alight with all the colors of the rainbow. Cheering and clapping were heard until the last big blast signaled the end of the evening's pyrotechnics.

Karen explained that Tivoli was famous for its fireworks, then added, "Time to go home now." As she led the way to the main gate, they discussed the deepening mystery.

"What wonderful detectives you are!" Karen said, still astounded by the Hollisters' success in finding the clue. "With both you and the police working on the case, I'm sure you'll find Mr. Bushyface."

After the Hollisters had returned to their hotel, Karen departed with her niece and nephew.

"We'll see you later," Nils promised, and said they would telephone the Hollisters at their hotel.

After Pete and Pam had told their parents about the strange happenings at Tivoli, the children went to bed. Soon asleep, Pam had an odd dream. It seemed to her that after a great burst of fireworks Mr. Bushy-face himself emerged from the glowing display. And as he fell earthward, his beard dropped off. First the man began to laugh at her, then suddenly his entire person changed into a weird-looking tattoo mark.

The dream was so real that Pam sat up quickly in her bed. Much to her surprise, it was daylight and Sue was jumping up and down on the foot of the bed. "Wake up, wake up! Mother has a surprise for us."

Pam rubbed her eyes sleepily and swung her feet to the floor.

"What's the surprise, Mother?" she asked as Mrs. Hollister entered the room.

"It will keep until breakfast is over."

All the children were eager to find out what their mother had in store for them. She was always coming up with surprises and usually they meant great fun for her children.

This day's big secret was no exception. When they had eaten a hearty meal, Mr. and Mrs. Hollister led their children to the front of the hotel. There stood six bicycles. One of them had a little bucket seat over the rear mudguard.

"Oh, Mother, I love you!" Holly shrieked, and flung her arms about Mrs. Hollister.

"Hurrah! We're going sight-seeing on bikes!" Ricky shouted as he reached for one of the smaller bicycles.

"Oh, please don't leave me behind," lamented Sue, seeing that none of the bicycles was her size.

"Of course not," Mrs. Hollister said. "You're going to sit right behind me like this." She put Sue into the bucket seat, then mounted the bicycle.

"Hold on tight to Mommy, especially when we go around corners," Mrs. Hollister cautioned Sue. The others mounted their bikes, and off they went.

Mr. Hollister led the way along the street. Pam, laughing, remarked that they must look like a family of ducks, following one behind the other.

"Now let's stay close together," Mr. Hollister called back. "Don't get lost in all this bicycle traffic."

Skillfully he guided his little procession up one street and down another. Every time they turned a corner, there was something interesting to see. Off to one side was a building with a tower that spiraled like a stick of twisted taffy. The Hollisters passed several statues of men on horses. One of these heroes, named Absalom, was the founder of Copenhagen, Mr. Hollister pointed out.

The riders approached the main square of Copenhagen. It seemed as if all the bicycles in the little country were gathered there. When a red light stopped the procession, Holly and Ricky, bringing

up the rear, stared at an elderly woman astride a bicycle alongside them.

"Even old ladies ride here," Holly observed with a twinkle. The woman's wrinkled face broke into a smile, and she waved at them.

By the time Ricky and Holly looked ahead again, they were surprised to see that the light had already turned green and the cyclists were off in a pleasant hum of wheels.

"Where are Daddy and Mommy and the others?" Holly asked, looking about.

"They've gone on without us!" Ricky moaned.

The two youngsters increased their speed, threading in and out among the riders; but they could not catch sight of the rest of the family.

"What'll we do?" Holly asked as she pulled her bicycle up to the curb.

"I don't know," Ricky said. "I guess we're just a couple of lost ducks."

## CHAPTER 7

### MISCHIEVOUS HOLLY

THE brother and sister pedaled from one street to another, but with no luck. The rest of the Hollister family was not in sight.

"Yikes!" Ricky said. "Maybe they didn't even miss us."

"But if Mommy and Daddy reach Tivoli and we're not there, then what?" Holly worried.

Instead of replying, Ricky stopped at a curb and, turning his head, said, "Look at the statue of that funny lady, Holly."

Along the bank of the canal in front of them stood a statue of a plump little woman dressed in a long gown and a bonnet. A shawl was draped on her shoulders and in her hands she held a large flounder.

"Oh—but look over there—I see some *real* fish ladies," said Holly, pointing.

"It's an outdoor fish store," Ricky observed.

The two children got off their bikes and pushed them closer to the odd-looking market. Fishwives, dressed very much like the statue, stood behind little counters. Baskets of fish lay all about and customers were selecting the ones they wanted to buy.

What amazed Holly and Ricky more than anything

else was the speed with which the fishwives worked. Their knives flashed as they split the fish and skinned them as easily as one would peel a banana.

Seeing the curious children watching intently, a woman purchasing a large fish turned to them with a smile and asked, "Is this your first visit to the fish market?"

Ricky nodded and grinned. "Is the statue in honor of the fish ladies here?" he asked.

The Danish woman answered yes. The fishwives had sold their wares at this spot for many, many years. The fresh fish, she explained, were hauled up the canal directly from the sea.

As one of the fishwives wrapped a fillet for her customer, Holly said, "We're lost. Can you tell us how to get to Tivoli?"

But before their new friend could reply, a familiar voice boomed, "*Du store Kineser!*"

Ricky and Holly whirled about, startled. There stood *Farfar* beside one of the fish counters. His right hand rested on the handle bars of his bicycle. The two youngsters hurried over to his side.

"*Farfar!*" exclaimed Holly. "Oh, we're so glad to see you!"

"Are you buying fish, too?" the old man questioned with a twinkle in his eyes.

The brother and sister quickly explained that they were lost.

*Farfar* chuckled and picked up his package of fish. "Come. Follow me. We go to Tivoli."

As the three rode along the narrow streets, *Farfar* told them that he had come to town to do a few errands. "*Farmor* always likes me to buy fresh fish when I'm here," he explained.

The children were surprised to see how near they were to *Raadhus Plads*, the town hall square, and Tivoli, situated nearby. *Farfar* led them directly to the main gate, where many riders were parking their bicycles.

Suddenly Mr. Hollister's voice sounded loud and clear. "There are Holly and Ricky now, Elaine. I told you they would catch up with us."

"And look, *Farfar's* with them!" Pete exclaimed as his brother and sister approached.

In the happy reunion, Holly and Ricky told their parents what had happened.

"It was nothing," *Farfar* said as Mrs. Hollister thanked him. "These children could have found their way here without me, I'm sure."

"How is your model ship coming along?" Pete asked the old seaman.

"Fine! Fine! In a few days it will be finished." Then a troubled look came into *Farfar's* eyes, and he added, "But the churches are having trouble with others of these ships."

"What do you mean?" Pam asked.

"Here. I'll show you," the old man replied. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a newspaper clipping. Translating carefully, he read it to the Hollisters. The article told of thefts of some of the church

ships. In some cases the thieves, after stealing the ships, had mutilated them. A few had been found by the roadside, broken to pieces.

"Oh, dear!" Pam exclaimed. "Why would anyone do such a mean thing as that?"

"I should think they'd sail them," Ricky spoke up.

This remark made *Farfar* smile. "I'm afraid the thieves are not looking for toys to steal," he said. "There is some more mysterious reason."

Pam thought that perhaps the culprits were searching for something inside the model ships, and *Farfar* said that might be true. But he had never known of anything of value to be concealed inside the miniature crafts.

"Anyhow," he stated, "the police are looking for the vandals." Then he added more cheerfully, "Come visit us again. You have not yet seen my big sailboat."

The Hollisters said good-by and *Farfar* mounted his bicycle and rode away.

As the family entered Tivoli, Pam eagerly watched her mother's face as she took in the exciting new spectacle.

"Isn't it exciting, Mother?" she asked as they passed the pantomime show. Both Mr. and Mrs. Hollister declared that they had never seen such a wonderful park in their lives.

Just then they heard the stirring sound of a marching band.

"Yikes!" exclaimed Ricky. "A parade!"

Turning the corner of a path were the most unusual paraders the youngsters had ever seen.

"They're soldiers!" Holly burst out. "But how small they are!"

"Midgets, I'll bet," Ricky declared. As the band marched toward them, however, they could see that these were young boys. They were dressed in red coats and white trousers with a blue stripe down the side. On their heads they wore tall fur hats.

"This must be the Tivoli Guard I've heard about," Mrs. Hollister ventured. She told the youngsters that she had been reading about Tivoli the evening before. The Guard, she explained, was a reminder of the old days in Copenhagen. These boys, marching so erect, symbolized the fact that Tivoli welcomes children to take an active part in the fun it has to offer.

After the Guard had passed by, Pete, Pam, Ricky, Holly, and Sue trooped along behind them with a group of Danish youngsters. They did not stop until Ricky spied a balloon man. The bright-colored balloons, inflated with gas and tied with string, bobbed high above the head of the vendor.

"May we have one? Please, Daddy," Sue begged.

"Surely. Choose your colors." Mr. Hollister reached into his pocket for a handful of coins.

All selected red-, yellow-, and purple-striped balloons with the name "Tivoli" on them. Then Ricky, Holly, and Sue skipped on ahead, with the boy jig-

gling his balloon on the end of the string. Several times he bumped it into Holly's head.

"Stop it, Ricky!" Holly protested.

Ricky ran in a circle about her, teasing. But what he did not see was Holly removing one of her barrettes.

Again he bobbed the balloon against her head. This time Holly was ready. She jabbed the balloon with her barrette.

*Pop!* Ricky's balloon burst right under his chin. "Hey, Holly!" he said, his voice dropping.

His tomboy sister slid the barrette into her hair, wrinkled her nose, and declared, "Now we're even for pushing the cotton candy in my face."

At first Ricky looked glum. But then a wide grin crept over his freckled face, and he held out his hand. "Okay, let's shake."

If Ricky had any more thoughts about playing tricks on Holly, they were erased by the sight of a large play area for children. Situated at one end of the lovely park were swings, slides, seesaws, and a large sandbox.

"Let's play there!" Ricky shouted, and raced on ahead. Taking Sue by the hand, Holly followed him. Ricky immediately climbed the highest slide and zipped down, while Holly and Sue selected a seesaw and started to bounce up and down on it.

Seeing this, Pete took Pam aside and whispered. Then they approached their parents, who were relaxing on a park bench. "Pam and I would like per-

mission to do some more detective work," Pete said.

"Do you really think the bearded man may still be in Tivoli?" Mrs. Hollister asked sympathetically.

"You never can tell what we might find out," Pete replied hopefully. He asked if he and his sister might wander about for a while and return to the play area later.

"Okay, detectives," their father consented, giving them a snappy salute. "And don't come back without another good clue!"

Peter and Pam made their way directly to the place where they had lost sight of their quarry the evening before.

"What'll we do now?" Pam asked.

Pete thought they should try to find someone who had seen either the bearded man or the clean-shaven fellow who had his penknife.

Not far from them was an amusement area with all sorts of games of skill and chance. Perhaps one of the concessionaires might give them some information.

"Anyhow," Pete remarked, "I want to play a few games myself!"

"I see a good one," Pam said. She pointed to a booth which had a table covered with black velvet. It sloped from front to back, where there were five small holes. The trick was to roll a ball down the sloping cloth so it would drop into one of the holes.

Each of the children gave the concessionaire a coin and in return got four plastic spheres the size of

golf balls. Pete rolled first. He missed all the holes.

"I've got the range now, Pam," the boy announced, aiming carefully. The second ball dropped into the hole.

"Good for you!"

Pete aimed again. The next two balls scored!

Now it was Pam's turn. Her skill proved almost as good. After missing with her first two balls, she lined up three and four so that they dropped in for scores.

The man behind the concession then gave each of the children a ticket and addressed them in halting English. "Prizes—there." He pointed to another booth.

"*Tak, tak,*" Pete thanked the man in Danish. Then he asked the concessionaire whether he had seen a suspicious-looking bearded man the evening before.

The fellow shrugged in reply. "Who can tell?"

Disappointed, Pete and Pam walked to the prize booth, an array of shelves containing hundreds of small trinkets. When a boy behind the counter spoke in Danish, Pete replied, "Do you speak English?"

"Yes."

"What kind of prize can we get for ten points?"

The boy's hand indicated a lower shelf. On it were souvenir pencils, little whistles, and small pocket mirrors with "Tivoli" written on the back.

Just then, however, Pam's eyes came to rest on the highest shelf. There were several figurines of the Little Mermaid!



*Pete rolled first.*

“Pete!” she said guardedly. “Don’t they look familiar to you?”

“Crickets! They sure do!” Pete agreed.

At this, the Danish boy smiled. “People seem to like them,” he said. “There was a bearded man here last night——”

“A bearded man!” Pete interrupted in spite of himself. “Did he get one of those Little Mermaids?”

The boy said yes, but the fellow had not been skilled at the concession games. “It took him a long time to win one of the Little Mermaids,” the Danish lad went on. “You see, it takes twenty-five points.” Then he added, “That fellow had asked for the same prize a month ago. I remembered him because of a mark on his right hand.”

“A tattoo?” Pam inquired, her pulse pounding with excitement.

“Yes, how did you know?” the boy asked, surprised. “There was a tattoo of a flag on his hand, but it wasn’t the Danish flag.”

## CHAPTER 8

### *A SHIP'S SECRETS*

"THE police are looking for that man with the tattoo!" Pete told the boy behind the prize counter.

The lad's eyes widened, and he leaned closer to the American visitors. "Is he a criminal?"

"He's a suspect, at least," Pete volunteered.

Pam did not wish to tell too much about Mr. Bushyface and changed the subject. "I wish I could have a Little Mermaid."

"You can if you win more points."

"Okay. Come on, Pam. We'll get them." They hurried back to the bowling game. Five minutes later, after each had bowled a perfect game, Pete and Pam returned to the prize booth.

"I'll take the Little Mermaid," Pam said happily. Within a few minutes, the brother and sister had returned to the playground.

"Dad!" Pete cried, running to his father. "We found some clues all right!" Pam showed the little figurine while Pete told what they had learned about the bearded man.

"Pretty clever of Mr. Schwartz—and it seems as if it were he," the children's mother commented.

Mr. Hollister concurred and reasoned that if the

thief had obtained the cheap figurine as a prize, there would be no way of tracing it to any store.

"That's what I thought, too, Dad," agreed Pam. She wanted to return to the hotel immediately to get in touch with Miss Petersen. "She has that little substitute statue," Pam said. "We can compare hers with ours."

"I'll bet they match!" declared Pete.

Ricky, Holly, and Sue, however, did not want to leave Tivoli immediately, and pleaded for a ride on the *roundabout*.

"I have an idea," Pete stated. "I'll phone Miss Petersen and ask her to meet us at the hotel after lunch."

This plan pleased everyone because, secretly, Mrs. Hollister, too, wished to ride on the merry-go-round; and her husband got as much fun out of the *switch-back* as his children did.

After lunch at one of the lovely outdoor restaurants at Tivoli, the Hollisters returned to their bicycles. This time Mrs. Hollister rode at the rear of the group so that no stragglers would get lost again in Copenhagen.

Miss Petersen met them in the lobby. "Thanks for your call, Pete," she said, smiling as she greeted the Hollister family once again. "I have the imitation figurine here in my purse." She and Pam walked to a table in one corner of the lobby and set the two figurines down side by side.

"They're twins!" chirped Holly.

"As alike as peas in a pod!" declared her father. "That was an excellent deduction," he said proudly to Pam and Pete.

"You certainly are good detectives," commented Miss Petersen. "It wouldn't surprise me if you catch the thief by yourselves."

"I'd sure like to," asserted Pete.

"But what puzzles me," said the young woman, "is why this man Schwartz wanted more than one imitation figurine."

Pam thought she had the answer. "Miss Petersen," she said, "are there other valuable Little Mermaid figurines in Denmark?"

"A few," came the reply. "One is in a famous shop at Helsingor near Kronborg Castle."

"Then maybe Mr. Bushyface is planning to steal more of the good ones."

Before Miss Petersen said good-by, they discussed the clue of the flag tattoo. "I'm glad the thief is not a Dane," Miss Petersen remarked, adding, "There's a special legend about our flag, which is called the *Dannebrog*. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, yes," they chorused.

The woman related that in an ancient battle against the Estonians the Danes had lost their flag and were near defeat. Then a red banner with a white cross on it fell from the sky to the field of battle. As the Danes fought under this heaven-sent flag, the tide of battle turned in their favor.

"So, the white cross banner, the *Dannebrog*, has

ever since been our national flag," Miss Petersen concluded.

"Yikes!" declared Ricky. "That's a swell way to get a flag. Betsy Ross made ours. But she just sat down and sewed it!"

Miss Petersen rose to leave, promising them that if she heard any more news about the thief she would inform them immediately.

The Hollisters were hardly back in their suite when the doorbell rang. "Who is it?" Pam called out.

"Karen."

"Come in," Pam invited as she opened the door. The young Danish woman held a newspaper in her hands.

"Look at this," she said. "It seems as if your Mr. Bushyface is at it again."

All the Hollisters gathered around her and listened intently while Karen read them a news report of an attempted theft in a shop at Helsingor.

"The intruder was chased off," Karen said, "before he could steal anything. And guess what? He was trying to get a valuable Little Mermaid."

"Come on. Let's go to Helsingor right away!" Ricky declared. "I want to catch Mr. Bushyface."

"Not today," said his mother, "but perhaps soon." She explained that Helsingor and Kronborg Castle were on their list of places to visit while in Denmark. But first, they had some more sight-seeing to do in Copenhagen.

"And some shopping, too." Mr. Hollister winked

at his wife. "Don't forget, I promised you a silver bracelet, Elaine."

"Perhaps I can take the children sight-seeing while you go shopping," Karen suggested.

"Yikes! Yikes!" exclaimed Ricky as he did a double flip-flop on the floor to demonstrate his delight.

"Let's go on bikes again so I can ride in the basket," Sue said.

The Hollisters readily agreed to Karen's plan. And, after the children had said good-by to their parents, they set off on their bicycles again.

"Stop bouncing up and down, dear," Karen cautioned Sue as they rode along through a quaint park.

"But I'm hungry," Sue said plaintively.

Pam, riding alongside her small sister, instantly saw the reason for Sue's sudden appetite. An ice cream vendor's cart was parked not far ahead.

"All right," Karen said, reaching back with one hand to pat her tiny passenger's head. "I'd enjoy an ice cream bar, too."

After they had stopped and had their ice cream, Karen continued to lead her little caravan. As they turned a corner, Pete spotted an old church.

"Do you suppose they have any ship models in there, Karen?" he asked.

"We'll stop and see."

With their bicycles parked in front of the church, the sight-seers pushed open the large, heavy oak door and peered inside.

"There's one!" Pete whispered. Near the front of

the church, a beautiful ship hung down from the ceiling on two cables. As Pete and Pam led the way quietly up the aisle to look at it, a man appeared from the nave carrying a ladder. He walked over beneath the ship model, set his ladder firmly on the floor, and started to mount it. In the dim light, Pete could not be sure whether he wore a beard or not.

Pete wanted to cry out "Stop!" thinking the man was trying to steal the model, but he did not wish to make any noise in the church.

"Karen, Karen, what'll we do?" the boy whispered.

"What do you mean?" she asked calmly.

"To catch the thief."

The Danish girl held a hand to her mouth to suppress a laugh. "Pete," she told him, "that's the sexton. You can tell by his long robe!"

Pete felt the blood rush to his face in a blush that even Pam could see in the dim church. "I—I didn't notice," he stammered. As the Hollisters continued down the aisle, the sexton lifted the ship model from two hooks on the end of the cable and gently carried it down to the floor.

"Hello," Karen greeted him. "What are you going to do with the ship?"

"Clean it," the man answered in Danish. "It hasn't been tended to for quite a while." The sexton took a cloth from his pocket and dusted the model.

"May we look in it?" Ricky asked the man.

"Ja, ja, I show you." The custodian lifted off the



*"Karen, what'll we do?" the boy whispered.*

deck. The inside of the vessel was hollow and in it were several long metal tubes.

"May we see what's inside the tubes," Pam asked, "if it's not too much trouble?"

The sexton readily assented. He unscrewed a cap at the end of one of the tubes and removed a roll of parchment. Karen helped the sexton to spread it open.

"Crickets!" Pete exclaimed. "It's just like a blueprint."

The specifications for the ship were neatly drawn and hand-lettered.

Pete whispered to Karen. "Does it say anything about a treasure?"

The young woman laughed and said no.

Pete could hardly wait until the sexton opened the second tube. It contained another scroll, but nothing more. This parchment revealed that the donor, Sven Janssen, had made and presented the model ship in honor of his father, a sea captain lost in a Baltic Sea storm.

Pam addressed the sexton. "Have you heard about the thieves who are stealing the model ships from churches in your country?"

The man replied yes, but he could not understand the motive for the thefts.

"We think something valuable is hidden inside a certain ship model," Pam confided as the custodian replaced the tubes, finished cleaning the ship model, and hung it back in its place.

The sexton chuckled and said, "I think I'll put a sign on our ship: 'Thieves—this ship has no treasure inside, so go away.' " Then the jolly man folded his stepladder and walked quietly out of a side door of the church.

Once outside again, Karen and the children continued their ride about the city. "Would you like to see Christiansborg Castle?" she asked them.

"Oh, yes. Is the King there?" Ricky asked.

Karen told them the King did not live there any more, and the palace was used by the parliament. She said they could cycle about the Christiansborg grounds.

Ricky and Holly discovered, as they approached their destination, that the palace was not far from the fishwives' market place. The stone building stood tall and proud. The front gate led directly through the building to a courtyard in the rear. Through this opening Pam spied a woman riding a horse.

Pam was very fond of horses, so she pedaled ahead of the others to see what was going on.

Much to her surprise, she discovered a sizable riding track in back of the palace. Karen told Pam that the woman she had seen was exercising horses from the royal stables. "The King's, Queen's, and Princesses' horses are all kept here."

The visitors stood astride their bicycles and watched as the beautiful animal circled the track. As it drew near to them, Karen called to the woman in Danish. The rider, dressed in jodhpurs and a white

shirt open at the neck, reined her mount to a stop and smiled down at the Hollisters. Then in English she said, "This horse is Trina. She belongs to the Queen."

Pam walked up to the horse, which lowered her head so the girl could stroke her nose.

"I'd love to ride a Queen's horse," Pam said wistfully.

"Are you a good rider?" the woman asked her.

Pam blushed a bit as Holly replied for her. "Sure my sister's a good rider. She can even ride our burro, Domingo."

"Then, how would you like to take Trina around the track once?" the woman asked.

"I'd love it!" Pam's eyes sparkled joyfully.

The rider dismounted. She helped Pam get one foot in the high stirrup, then boosted her atop Trina. Pam's smile was as broad as the palace courtyard. She touched Trina's flank lightly with her heels, and the horse trotted proudly around the track.

Ricky, meanwhile, walked over to one side of the courtyard, where the stables were. Perhaps he could see some more royal horses, he thought.

As the boy neared one of the stall doors, he suddenly saw a man's hand appear from inside. Ricky stopped still, for on the back of the hand was a tattoo that looked to him like a flag! As he stared, the hand disappeared into the stall.

Too excited to cry out, Ricky opened the stall door and dashed inside.

## CHAPTER 9

### A RUNAWAY CHEESE

INSIDE the stable, Ricky tiptoed quietly along the concrete floor. Ahead of him, a man in overalls was walking past the row of stalls in which several horses nickered and whinnied.

Quivering with excitement, Ricky quickened his pace and came up behind the fellow.

"Hello!" he called in a loud voice.

Startled, the man whirled about. Now Ricky could plainly see that there was a flag tattooed on his right hand. *It was the Dannebrog!* This was not the thief, Ricky thought, embarrassed. He did not know what to say, but the man did, all of it in rapid Danish. He gestured excitedly at the boy.

"Okay, I'll go," Ricky said meekly, understanding the sign language. "I'm sorry."

Seconds later he dashed up to Karen and the others. Pete was now astride Trina, enjoying a ride around the ring.

When Pete dismounted, the Danish horsewoman mentioned that she had to return Trina to the stall.

"I just saw the groom beckon to me," she said.

"It is feeding time for the horses." She added, "I'm

sorry that the younger children cannot have a ride now."

"Oh, that's all right," Ricky said quickly, keeping one eye on the stable door. The man with the *Dannebrog* tattoo was the royal horses' groom! The red-haired boy tugged Karen by the hand. "Let's go bike riding some more," he urged.

After the children had thanked the horsewoman, they remounted their bicycles. Following a different route, the cyclists made their way through Copenhagen back to the hotel. There Pete telephoned the police, asking if there was any news about the man who had stolen his knife. The answer was negative, and Pete was keenly disappointed.

He smiled soon again, however, when Nils and Astrid knocked on the door of the Hollisters' hotel suite. After the children had greeted their Danish friends, Karen asked, "Did you come to play with the Hollisters?"

"Better than that," Nils grinned. "I want Pete and Ricky to ride out to our house and stay overnight."

"Crickets! That'll be keen!"

"Yikes! Let's go right away!"

Pam turned to Astrid and said, "Why don't you stay at the hotel with us overnight? You could wear a pair of my pajamas and Mother always has extra toothbrushes."

Sue, Holly, and Astrid were greatly in favor of this idea. Karen smiled. "That will be very nice. We must ask Mrs. Hollister about it, though."

Mr. and Mrs. Hollister, when they returned from their shopping trip shortly afterward, were delighted to have Astrid as a guest and telephoned the Danish girl's mother for permission.

"Now you boys be careful," Mrs. Hollister said to her sons. "Don't get into any mischief at the Clausens' home."

Pete and Ricky had hastily packed their toothbrushes and pajamas in the small plane satchel furnished by the air lines. "All right, Mom," they promised, and said good-by to their family.

The brothers accompanied Nils to the front of the hotel, where the bicycles were racked. Nils took them on a shortcut out of Copenhagen. Then a mile or so along the main highway he turned left onto a country road. Presently the road cut through rolling meadowlands where cattle were grazing on the green grass. A few tall trees grew beside the road.

"Say, Nils, what's up there?" Pete asked, pointing to one of the treetops.

"That's a stork's nest." The three riders stopped their bikes and gazed upward. On top of the nest was a stork standing on one leg, looking down at the boys.

"We Danes believe storks bring good luck," Nils said.

"It's an awful quiet bird," Ricky observed, shielding his eyes for a better look at the stork.

This caused Nils to laugh. "Storks don't make any noise." He added, "Hardly any noise, that is." The

Danish boy explained that once in a while somebody heard them grunt. But usually storks were mute.

The boys mounted their bicycles again and, as they pedaled along, Nils told them that there are not as many storks in Denmark as there used to be.

"But we have an entire family of storks that visits our house every year," Nils said proudly. "We help to build their nest."

"Really?" Pete was surprised. "With what? Sticks and mud?"

"You'll never guess." Nils grinned as they raced down a dip in the road. "Just wait and you'll see," he added mysteriously.

Finally Nils turned his bicycle off the country road onto a lane which led to a small settlement of houses. They were spaced far apart, with farmland stretching to the rear of each dwelling.

"There's our house." Nils pointed to a pretty little cottage which snuggled among beds of brightly colored flowers.

Behind the house Pete and Ricky noticed a low, wide building. On top of it was a long pole with a white sock attached.

"Is that a wind sock on a hangar?" Pete asked.

Nils smiled. "You guessed it. Father keeps his airplane there." He winked and asked, "Do you see my stork?"

Ricky and Pete glanced about, turning their heads from side to side like radar scanners. Then both boys spotted it at the same time. On the flat roof of the

hangar was an old automobile tire. The stork's nest fitted into the tire and the long-beaked bird was there now, sitting on its nest.

Pete and Ricky were very curious about the odd arrangement. Nils explained that many Danes encouraged storks to nest near their homes by putting discarded tires on top of roofs or tall poles. "The storks can build their nests quicker on the tires," he said.

Just then the boys heard the hum of an airplane in the distance. Soon they saw a small green and white plane circling above.

"There's Father now." Nils hurried toward the hangar. The plane circled lower and lower, finally touching down in the large level field behind the hangar. The craft taxied to the spot where the boys were standing, and the pilot cut the motor. He opened the door and hopped out.

Mr. Clausen was a tall, handsome man with a shock of blond hair that kept falling down into his eyes. As a result, he had the habit of running his hand through his hair. Nils introduced his new friends, and they all shook hands.

"I'm glad you have come to visit us," Mr. Clausen said to Pete and Ricky. "How would you like a ride in my airplane later?"

"Keen!"

"Super!"

The Hollisters followed Nils and his father inside the house, where Mrs. Clausen greeted them warmly.

The slender, dark-haired woman smiled. "You boys must be hungry. Come. Supper is ready."

Everyone went into the attractive, cheerful dining room and sat down at the table. Pete and Ricky found the Danish-style meal delicious.

After dessert—a rich cake with fruit and nuts—Mr. Clausen rose and said to Nils, "I have a little work to do. Then we will go for an airplane ride. In the meantime, perhaps our visitors would like to see the cheese factory."

"That'd be swell," said Pete, and the boys were soon pedaling down the road. About fifteen minutes later they passed several barns full of cows. Nils said they provided milk for the factory.

"Hmm." Ricky grinned. "Cheese cows!"

The factory, a one-story concrete building, stood on a knoll not far from the barns. Nils led the Hollisters to a storeroom in the rear, where two large doors stood open. From inside came the sharp, tantalizing aroma of cheese.

The cheeses, about the size of small cart wheels, were stacked one atop the other. Some of the stacks reached nearly to the ceiling.

Ricky peered about the storeroom. As no grownups were around, he whispered, "May I try lifting a cheese, Nils?"

"You couldn't. They are very heavy."

"Maybe *I* could then," Pete declared, eager to test his own strength.

“Go ahead and try.” Nils grinned. “But I’ll bet that you can’t.”

Pete walked over to a stack of cheeses which stood as high as his head. He reached up to the top one and tried to lift it.

“Crickets, this *is* heavy!” the boy exclaimed.

“What did I tell you?” Nils folded his arms over his chest and laughed.

“Oh, I can do it all right,” Pete claimed determinedly. He tugged at the cheese wheel again. It moved a little, then *slip!* The cheese skidded off the one beneath it and struck the floor, narrowly missing Pete’s foot. Then it rolled right on across the room and out the doorway!

“Grab that cheese!” Ricky yelled, and the three boys raced outside.

The round cheese by now was spinning down the slope. After just missing a large stone, it whizzed past the tail feathers of a goose waddling across a path.

Embarrassed, the trio finally caught up with the cheese some distance from the barn. Then Nils burst out laughing. “You win, Pete,” he said. “You moved the cheese all right!”

“Did I hurt it?”

“No damage. Let’s roll it back.”

Pete and Nils took turns pushing the yellow cart wheel uphill to the barn. Then, with Ricky helping, too, they managed to lift the cheese and set it once more on the stack.

The boys were relieved to note that apparently no



*"Grab that cheese!" Ricky yelled.*

one around the factory had noticed the mishap. Quietly they mounted their bikes and rode back to Nils' home. Mr. Clausen had just come outside. He hailed the cyclists as they pedaled up to him.

"How did you like the cheeses?"

"They were great," Ricky said. "Big and round—and *speedy*!"

Nils shot him a warning glance, but Mr. Clausen merely said, with a puzzled shrug, "Speedy? I have never heard of a speedy cheese. Well, never mind. Let's take a ride in my speedy airplane now."

Ricky and Pete had been in small airplanes before, so they knew how to climb into the open door and take seats directly behind the pilot.

Nils slipped into the copilot's seat beside his father. Soon the engine roared, and the plane took off gracefully.

In a few minutes they were over Copenhagen.

"Look, Tivoli's down there!" Pete cried out.

Ricky added excitedly, "I can see the Ferris wheel!"

The pilot then headed north along the seacoast. After an enjoyable ride above the Oresund, the narrow strait separating Denmark from Sweden, the plane circled another large city. Nils identified it as Helsingor. The Hollister boys peered out eagerly. At the same moment they both cried out, "There's Kronborg Castle!"

In a few minutes Mr. Clausen banked the plane and started back toward Copenhagen. He had not

gone far when Ricky pointed to a windmill near the water front. It was the only one in the area whose blades were turning.

"That's crazy. Why aren't the other windmills working, too?"

Mr. Clausen agreed that it was indeed strange. "And I know there's no breeze," he said. "Let us take a closer look."

As the pilot dipped lower, two men came out of a door at the base of the windmill, and the blades stopped turning.

"Crickets! That's mysterious," Pete exclaimed. "What do you think is going on down there, Mr. Clausen?"

"I must admit I have no idea," the flyer replied, adding that he had never seen such a thing before.

"Maybe it's a signal," Pete surmised.

"To whom?" asked Nils.

"Some boat on the Oresund."

"That could be."

Pete pondered the mysterious windmill as the plane sped on. He hoped there would be a chance to visit the windmill on his family's auto trip to Helsingor.

Soon the airplane landed on the pasture behind the Clausen home. The group climbed out.

"That was a swell ride," said Ricky.

"A dandy," added Pete. "We even found another mystery."

Mr. Clausen chuckled. "I see Nils is right—you *are* good detectives."

As they walked toward the house, Pete asked if there were any church ships in the area. He told the Clausens of his suspicion that there might be something valuable in one of the ships and that this was causing the wave of thefts.

"We'd like to find the treasure," Ricky put in, "before the thieves do."

Nils nodded. "There is a church with a *kirkeskibe* just beyond the cheese factory. You can see the steeple from here."

It was still fairly light, so the three boys got on their bicycles and rode to the local church. It was a quaint, old building with a bell in the steeple.

Nils introduced the Hollisters to the minister and asked whether his friends could see the ship. The pastor, Mr. Hemming, was happy to escort the visitors into the church.

There in the front vestibule near the belfry rope hung a large model ship, attached to the ceiling by two chains.

"Could we get a closer look, please?" Pete requested.

"Surely." Pastor Hemming brought a ladder from a storage room and Pete climbed up to view the vessel.

The boys carefully lifted a part of the deck and peered inside. Nothing was there, not even a metal tube or scroll of any kind. The minister explained that the ship had been hanging there when he had

first come to the church and had never contained any identification.

Pete and Ricky thanked the pastor for his favor, then returned to the Clausen home with Nils. After drinking cups of hot chocolate topped with whipped cream, the boys went to bed.

The two Hollisters liked sleeping under the wonderfully soft feather quilts. Ricky at first thought it was odd to use these during the summer. But soon he had to admit the thick quilts were needed, since the air had grown cold.

In the middle of the night the three boys suddenly were awakened by the sound of a loud gong. As one, they sat upright in their beds.

"What's that?" Pete asked.

"The church bell!" Nils exclaimed. "I've never heard it ring at night!"

## CHAPTER 10

### A GREAT DANE RACE

"IT MUST be an alarm of some kind," Nils said, excited, as the boys jumped out of their beds.

Mr. and Mrs. Clausen also were aroused by the church bell, which was still ringing. As the lads hurried into their clothes, the pilot opened the door and put his head into their room.

"Where are you going, boys?" he asked.

"Maybe there's a fire," Nils replied as he pulled a sweater over his head.

"Or perhaps a thief is trying to steal the church ship," said Pete.

"Why would he ring the bell and give himself away?" Ricky asked as he tightened his belt buckle and bent down to lace his shoes.

Mr. Clausen smiled. "Well, I suppose you fellows have to find out what the excitement's about. But you must be careful. There may be danger."

The three boys scrambled out of the house, mounted their bicycles, and rode off in the direction of the church. As they drew near the place, they saw flashlights bobbing in the darkness. "The noise must have awakened the whole village," Pete thought.

By the time the boys reached the church, Pastor Hemming and four other men carrying lights were cautiously approaching the front door.

At that very moment the side door of the church burst open. A figure dashed out into the darkness.

"Hey, look!" Ricky shouted.

"Stop!" Pete and Nils cried out together. But the midnight prowler had no intention of doing this. Instead, he ran along the road with the speed of a rabbit.

The boys, followed by the five men, had instantly given chase. But before anyone could reach him, the fugitive disappeared into a clump of trees. A moment later his pursuers heard the roar of a motor.

Nils, a fleet-footed boy, was now in the lead. Pete, directly behind him, suddenly saw the shadowy figure of a man on a motorcycle heading toward the road. Nils was directly in his path.

"Look out, Nils!" Pete cried. Leaping forward, he grabbed his friend by the shoulders just in time. The motorcycle whizzed in front of the Danish boy, bounced onto the road, and, with pistons racing, sped off into the darkness.

"He almost got you!" Ricky shouted.

"*Tak, tak*, Pete," said Nils. "You saved my life!"

Just then the men, led by Pastor Hemming, caught up with the three companions.

"You were brave boys to chase that man," the minister praised them. The others joined in commending Nils and his American friends.

Then all returned to the church to see what mis-

chief the prowler had done. The front door was locked.

"He must have entered by the side door," Pete declared.

They found that this door, not so sturdy as the front one, had been jimmied open. Once inside the church, the minister switched on the lights. Nothing seemed to have been disturbed, but Nils noticed that one of the swinging doors leading to the front foyer was half open.

The group hurried to examine the front entrance.

*Pete's guess had been right!* The model ship was hanging down, supported by only one chain, and directly beneath it stood a stepladder.

"So that's what the scoundrel was after," one of the men remarked.

The pastor shook his head. "I never thought the ship thief would visit us. And to think that only a few hours earlier I showed this model to you boys."

"We could have told the thief there was nothing in it," Ricky said with a grin.

As the men discussed the reason for the intruder's pulling the nearby bell rope, Pete and his brother started to search for clues. Ricky's eyes lighted on some pieces of broken glass on the floor.

"Pete, look at these," he said.

Pete bent down to examine the bits and slivers. By piecing them together, he discovered that they fashioned a small round lens.

"I've got it!" Pete declared. "The thief dropped his flashlight and broke the lens."

Then Nils continued trying to reconstruct the scene. "Perhaps the thief lost his balance in the darkness and grabbed onto the bell rope. Do you think that's right, Pastor?"

"Indeed, yes," Mr. Hemming replied. "Now you boys have solved the mystery of *how* it happened, but the next question is *who* it was?"

Pete suggested that everyone closely examine the foyer and the path through the church which the intruder had taken.

"We might find another clue this way," the boy told the men.

They joined enthusiastically in the search. After a few minutes, one of the men, searching near the side door, picked up a book of matches and handed it to Pete. At the same time Ricky found two burned matches.

"Now I get it!" Pete cried jubilantly. He surmised that the fugitive, having broken his flashlight, had to use matches in order to find his way out. "Mr. Hemming," he added, "the prowler must be American. People here carry matches in small boxes."

"That is right," came the reply.

Pete opened the paper flap and examined the matches. He noticed that the missing ones had been torn from the left-hand side of the matchbook. Suddenly a thought struck him. The user of the match-

book had been left-handed. Hadn't Mr. Bushyface used his left hand to light his cigarette?

"This might sound like a wild guess," Pete said to the pastor and the other men, "but I think we have a good clue as to who the prowler is." He quickly told the amazed adults what had happened on the overseas flight.

"I'll bet Mr. Bushyface is mixed up in this racket, too," Ricky spoke up.

As there were no police in the little settlement, Mr. Hemming said he would notify the authorities in Copenhagen about the attempted robbery. Then he thanked the boys for their help and the three returned to the Clausen home.

Nils' parents were up, waiting to hear the news. Mrs. Clausen passed around milk and cookies, and the boys told their story.

"Excitement seems to follow you Hollisters wherever you go, doesn't it?" asked Nils' mother. Mr. Clausen agreed.

The rest of the night passed quietly. After breakfast next morning the three boys started back toward Copenhagen. On the way Ricky stopped at the cheese factory and purchased a large wedge.

"Mother and Dad will like this, I think," he said, carrying the bag of cheese in his left hand while steering with his right.

Halfway to the city the riders saw a great Dane dog running across a field toward them.

"Come on, boy!" called Ricky, and the dog loped behind the bikes.

"Great Danes look very fierce," Nils said, "but they're really gentle, friendly dogs."

"This one wants to race," Pete said. He increased his speed. The great Dane gave a low, throaty bark and chased after Pete's bicycle.

"I can beat you!" Pete challenged the dog.

"Me, too!" Ricky declared.

Nils laughed at his rollicking American friends, who were now far in the lead. Ricky, instead of looking where he was going, turned his head to steal a glance at the bounding dog.

The next moment Ricky's bicycle veered off the road and into a ditch. He flew over the handlebars, still clinging to the bag of cheese. The boy landed with a thud and lay stunned, the breath knocked out of him.

"Ricky! Are you all right?" Pete cried, jumping off his bike and running to his brother's side. Nils did the same.

By this time the younger boy had caught his breath and sat up. His hair was mussed more than ever and there was a large green grass stain on the seat of his trousers.

"I'm okay." Ricky grinned broadly. "And I still have the cheese." The companions mounted their bicycles again.

When they arrived at their hotel, Pete was hailed



*Ricky turned his head to steal a glance at the dog.*

by the hall porter from his little desk on one side of the lobby.

"A message for you," the man said.

Pete hurried over to him and read a note which had been left there by his mother. It said, "We have gone to *Farfar's* and *Farmor's*. We will be back soon. Wait for us at the hotel."

Pete had just read the message to Ricky and Nils when suddenly Holly and Sue raced through the hotel doorway. They were followed by Pam, Astrid, and Mr. and Mrs. Hollister.

"Yikes! Look at them!" Ricky shouted, pointing to his sisters. The three Hollister girls were dressed in lovely, authentic Danish costumes!

"They're a surprise from *Farmor*. She made them for us," Sue declared, pirouetting about so that her skirts billowed.

Ricky now walked over to his mother and handed her the bag. "Here's a Danish surprise for you, Mother," he said.

Mrs. Hollister opened the bag and nibbled on a piece of the cheese. "It's delicious. Thank you very much." She bent over to hug her small son.

Then Mrs. Hollister declared, "We have another surprise for you boys." She told them that she had telephoned the twins' parents and obtained permission for Nils and Astrid both to stay overnight at the hotel with the Hollisters.

"Great," said Nils, breaking into a wide smile.

All through the day the American visitors and their

new Danish friends played near the hotel or strolled through the heart of Copenhagen, admiring the sights. The evening was passed just as pleasantly.

But next morning Mr. and Mrs. Hollister were awakened by a thumping and banging.

"What's that, John?" Mrs. Hollister inquired, sitting up with a start.

"I don't know, Elaine." Mr. Hollister leaped from bed and threw on his bathrobe.

The thumping and banging continued. It was coming from the living room of their suite. Mr. Hollister opened his bedroom door and stared in amazement!

## CHAPTER 11

### A SAILING ADVENTURE

SUE stood on a table in the middle of the room holding a Danish flag high over her head. Around her a battle was raging. Nils, Astrid, and Pam were dueling with Pete, Ricky and Holly. They were using rolled-up newspapers as swords!

*Slap! Bang! Ouch!*

"Say, what's going on here?" Mr. Hollister called out over the din.

Ricky turned his head for an instant. "We're the Estonians, Dad."

"The Danes are fighting us," Pete called out. "And we nearly have them beaten."

By this time Mrs. Hollister was at her husband's side.

"Quick! Drop the *Dannebrog!*" Nils called out to Sue.

The little girl let go of the flag. It fluttered to the floor, and Astrid picked it up, holding the banner proudly over her head. Then, with paper swords flailing wildly, the "Danes" chased the "Estonians" around the table and into one of the bedrooms.

"You win, you win!" Ricky said as the children all

trooped back to greet the astonished Mr. and Mrs. Hollister.

Sue jumped down from the table and rushed into her mother's arms. "I was the angel who dropped the banner from the sky," she said proudly.

"Goodness," her mother declared, looking about at the disheveled children. "I wouldn't say that any of you had wings."

"But what a keen battle!" Pete exclaimed.

"Judging by the noise, I thought you might be using cannons!" Mr. Hollister commented.

It was then that Pam noticed a trickle of blood coming from Ricky's nose. "Oh, oh, call for first aid," she said. She hurriedly obtained a handful of soft paper tissues which she dabbed on Ricky's "wound."

Nils was gingerly rubbing the back of his head. Mrs. Hollister hastened to examine the Danish boy and found that he had a large bump. A cold cloth compress, produced quickly by Astrid, helped to relieve the swelling.

"Whose idea was this?" Mrs. Hollister asked, not too pleased with the early-morning roughhouse.

Holly stepped forward, hung her head a little, and looked up shyly at her mother. "I thought it would be fun," she admitted.

"It really was!" Nils spoke up, still holding the cloth to the back of his head.

"Well," Mr. Hollister said, "*was* is right. If we have any more battles like that one, we'll probably have complaints from our hotel neighbors."

The Hollister children and their Danish friends could not help giggling all through breakfast as they recalled the fierce battle. When they had finished the meal, Nils and Astrid stood up to leave. "We hate to go but we have chores to do for our mother and father today," Nils announced.

"I hope we can see you again before you leave Denmark," Astrid remarked. She smiled at Mrs. Hollister. "And I promise we won't have any more battles with the Estonians."

Mrs. Hollister gave her a hug and shook hands with Nils. After the Clausen children had departed, the Hollisters talked over their plans.

"We have promised to visit *Farfar* and *Farmor* again this afternoon," Mrs. Hollister told the children.

"Then tomorrow," Mr. Hollister added, "we will take a leisurely drive to Kronborg Castle."

"Neat!" Pete exclaimed. "Maybe we can stop and see the odd windmill!" He had told his parents and sisters about the strange sight he and Ricky had seen from Mr. Clausen's plane.

"If we have time, we'll take a look," Mr. Hollister promised.

Following lunch, the Hollisters drove once more to the little cottage by the water front. *Farfar* and *Farmor* greeted their friends at the door. Then Karen appeared from the rear of the house. "Today I thought we'd sail the boat on the Oresund," she announced

gaily. "But I'm afraid that not all of us can go at the same time. The boat will hold only five."

"Pete and I can stay here," Ricky offered good-naturedly. "After all, we *did* have a lot of fun on the plane ride."

It was agreed that Sue would stay with *Farmor* to help her make mermaid cookies. The boys would assist *Farfar*, who still had a few more spars to whittle for his model ship. Pete missed his own knife, but *Farfar* said he had other whittling knives which the boys could use.

Soon the boating party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Hollister, Pam, Holly, and Karen, said good-by to the others and walked down to the water front. *Farfar's* white sailboat was moored at the dock.

"All aboard," Karen called out. The passengers stepped across a little catwalk onto the sailboat. Mrs. Hollister sat in the cockpit with her two daughters. Karen took the helm, while Mr. Hollister walked forward and sat cross-legged at the bow of the boat near the jib sail.

After the lines had been cast off, Karen started a small auxiliary outboard motor. Soon the sailboat, named the *Margrethe*, was heading out of the canal toward the open water of the Oresund. Here Karen shut off the motor and expertly unfurled the sails. Instantly a spanking breeze filled the canvas and the *Margrethe* cut sweetly through the wavelets.

Many other boats were out on the Oresund. There were large steamers, small motorboats, and sailing

craft much like the *Margrethe*. Karen now skillfully guided her boat far into the open water.

"There," she said, pointing. "Sweden is on the opposite shore. Would you like to go closer?"

"Oh, yes!" Pam called out, her fluffy blond hair blowing in the breeze. One of Pam's favorite movie actresses was Swedish. Just to see the star's country would give Pam a thrill.

Tacking first to port and then to starboard, Karen directed the little sailing boat across the Oresund. Then she reached down into a locker, pulled out a pair of binoculars, and handed them to Mrs. Hollister. "Now you can get a fine view of Sweden," she said.

First Mrs. Hollister, then the two girls, gazed through the binoculars at a small town lying on the shore of Sweden. Then Mr. Hollister had a turn. He scanned the shore line. Next, looking out across the water, he spied a large freighter steaming in their direction. Her gray hull loomed large through the field glasses.

"You'd better look out for that ship!" he called back to Karen as he returned the binoculars. "She's traveling fast."

"Don't worry," Karen said as she headed the *Margrethe* back toward the Danish shore. "The wind is strong and we'll pass in front of her without any trouble."

Things did not work out, however, as Karen had planned, because the breeze, which had been blow-

ing freshly, suddenly slackened. The sails went limp for a few moments.

"A fine time to run out of wind!" Karen exclaimed. She threw the boom over from one side to another, hoping to pick up a few puffs of breeze. This did not work.

The big gray ship, meanwhile, kept bearing down on them, and Mrs. Hollister looked fearfully to the girl at the tiller.

The confident smile had left Karen's face. With Mr. Hollister's aid, she tried to start the little auxiliary motor. Again and again they took turns pressing the starter.

*The motor failed to respond!*

Now a frightened look appeared on the faces of Holly and Pam.

"Wh—what are we going to do?" Holly asked.

"The pilot of the freighter should see us by now," said Karen calmly, looking up hopefully to the bridge of the big ship.

The skipper looked directly at them but did not move. Closer and closer loomed the prow of the freighter, hovering toward them like a large storm cloud.

Suddenly Karen felt a small breeze. She quickly swung the boom again, sending the sail in the opposite direction. The breeze filled it nicely and the little *Margrethe* picked up speed. And not a moment too soon! For the side of the sailboat nearly brushed the side of the freighter as it glided past.



*"A fine time to run out of wind!" Karen exclaimed.*

Finally clear of the big ship, Karen shook her head and said, "I'm sorry to have frightened you all, Mrs. Hollister." She added that this was the first time she had ever known a captain of a freighter to disregard the distress of a small boat.

As Pam watched the retreating vessel, its wake churning up white foam, she noticed the name on the freighter's stern.

"Mother! Dad! Look!" Pam cried out. The white letters stood out boldly. *Madagascar!*

The girl recalled the paper they had found on the park bench bearing the mysterious word *Madagascar*. Was there any connection between that and the ship which had just passed them?

"Pete'll be surprised to hear about this," Pam said as she talked about the clue. "Perhaps the man who has his penknife knows somebody in the *Madagascar's* crew."

"You've hit upon a good theory, Pam," her father said with admiration. "Remember the tattoo? Many seamen decorate themselves in that way." He added that perhaps the band of thieves were renegade sailors.

Karen smiled wryly and let out the sail to catch more of the freshening breeze. "I don't know that the *Madagascar's* captain is a crook," she said, "but he's no gentleman! *Farfar* will be furious to hear that he nearly ran us down."

Sailing the boat skillfully, Karen returned to the little canal. The motor still would not work, so the Dan-

ish girl had to tack this way and that, finally wharfing the *Margrethe* against *Farfar's* dock.

"Oh, Pete!" Pam called out. There was no reply. "Pete, Ricky! I have news for you!" she cried again, stepping over the little catwalk onto the green grass. Still no reply.

"I wonder where everyone is," Mrs. Hollister mused as she walked toward the cottage.

Karen said she was sure that the rest of the family would have seen the *Margrethe* approaching. With a laugh she added, "Well, maybe the boys are busy helping *Farfar*, and Sue and *Farmor* might just be taking the cookies from the oven."

Pam ran on ahead and opened the door. Again she called to her brothers. Still no reply. A chill ran up and down her back.

"Karen, I—I think something has happened," she said as the Danish girl, followed by the others, stepped into the house.

First Karen and her friends went to *Farfar's* workroom. The ship model was on the bench, but no one was in sight. Then they hastened to the kitchen. A tray of cookies was on the table, still warm from the oven. But *Farmor* and Sue were nowhere to be seen.

"Why—everybody has just—disappeared!" Karen said, perplexed, as she and the Hollisters looked at each other fearfully.

## CHAPTER 12

### RICKY, THE BIRD WATCHER

AS KAREN and the Hollisters stood wondering what to do, they heard voices coming from the road and hurried out the front door.

"Here they are!" Holly called out in relief as *Farfar* and *Farmor* Clausen, along with Ricky, Pete, and Sue, came toward them.

"It was Mr. Bushyface!" Sue cried out.

"He came to see *Farfar*!" Ricky exclaimed.

"Crickets!" Pete added. "We almost caught him, too."

The three children started jabbering breathlessly all at once until Mr. Hollister said, "Easy does it. Calm down, you Indians." He addressed *Farfar*. "Suppose you tell us what happened, Mr. Clausen."

"*Ja, ja*. I tell you." The old captain said that while he and the boys were whittling spars for his model boat, and Sue was in the kitchen with *Farmor*, a knock sounded on the door.

"I went to answer," *Farfar* went on. "A bearded man was standing there. He told me he was an American tourist interested in church ships. Did I know where he might see some very old ones?"

"That's when Sue came out of the kitchen," Ricky

broke in, jumping up and down like a jack-in-the-box.

"Don't interrupt, dear," Mrs. Hollister said as she put an arm around the boy. "Please go on, *Farfar*."

"Yes, Sue was bringing me and the boys some hot cookies," *Farfar* continued. Then he chuckled. "When our caller saw her, you should have seen the look on his face."

"Oh!" chirped Sue. "His eyes got so big! Then they closed like my dolly's." She shook her head and looked up at her mother. "He didn't like it when I called him Mr. Bushyface."

"Was it really he?" asked Pam.

"Yes," *Farfar* replied. "Because he said, 'Those Hollisters again!' Then he turned and ran."

Upon hearing the familiar voice of Mr. Schwartz, Pete and Ricky had come from the workbench to see what was going on.

"*Du store Kineser!*" *Farfar* exploded. "What a race we had!"

He said that all of them, including *Farmor*, who did not even take time to remove her apron, chased Mr. Bushyface down the lane. But he had jumped on his motor scooter and got away. His pursuers had followed all the way down to the main road, where they saw Mr. Bushyface make a right-hand turn and head toward Copenhagen.

*Farfar* added that they already had notified the police, who were still keenly interested in catching the mysterious Mr. Schwartz because of the Queen's figurine.

*Farmor*, who had not had much to say as yet, fingered her apron nervously. "I am worried about you Hollisters," she said. "Mr. Schwartz must be a very dangerous person."

"Yes," Karen put in. "I hope you all will be very careful while you are in Denmark."

Pam then related their adventure on the Oresund, where the *Madagascar* had nearly run them down. While the youngsters tried to figure out how the freighter might be connected with the elusive Mr. Schwartz, *Farmor* went into the kitchen and returned with a tray containing the mermaid cookies and glasses of milk for her guests.

"Thank you," said Sue as she lifted a mermaid cookie from the tray and took a bite. Next instant the little girl screamed, nearly spilling her milk on the living room floor.

"Gracious!" declared Mrs. Hollister with a start. "What on earth——"

"Ow! Ow!" wailed Sue, holding up the middle finger of her right hand for all to see. On it was a little red indentation.

"You bit your finger?" Ricky said, trying unsuccessfully not to smile.

"It isn't funny!" declared Sue as a tear ran down her cheek. "My finger was hiding behind the mermaid's tail."

This remark was too much for the boys, and they burst out laughing.

"Meanies!" Pam reproved them in a loud whisper.

"I'm sorry," Pete said, and Ricky also apologized.

When they had finished their milk and cookies without further mishaps, the Hollisters thanked the Clausens for a grand time and prepared to leave.

"Please come back and see us again," Karen said, promising that next time the two boys and Sue could have a ride in the *Margrethe*.

Outside, *Farfar* stroked his white beard. He glanced at the Hollister children, then at the little wooden trolls popping their heads from behind the shrubbery.

"Wait," the old gentleman said. "I would like you to have a reminder of your visits to our home." Then with a wink he added, "How would you like one of my trolls?"

"Oh, wonderful!" Holly said.

"Do you think we can carry it?" asked Pam excitedly. The little wooden figures were almost as large as Sue. To carry one all around Denmark and then back on the plane with them would be quite a problem.

"Do not worry about that," said *Farfar*. "I will send it to you in America. Which one would you like?"

The five children scurried about, examining each of the droll figures. Pam thought the happiest-looking one was the best. This gnomelike creature had a floppy hat, large round eyes, a turned-up nose, and a pixie smile. Pam's brothers and sisters readily agreed and *Farfar* said:

"Fine. By the time you arrive in America, the happy troll will be waiting at your home!"

After many good-bys the Hollisters returned to their hotel to prepare for the trip to Helsingor.

The next morning dawned sparkling clear, with hardly a cloud in the pale blue sky.

Once on their way in the little station wagon, Holly remarked, "Jeepers! We won't be able to find any ghosts in the old castle today. They don't roam around in the bright sunlight."

"Well, I'm sure we'll have some excitement. This family always has," replied Mr. Hollister as he drove through the outskirts of Copenhagen and into the open country.

The travelers enjoyed riding on the beautiful highway, which was narrower than many of those in the United States, but just as smooth. The road traversed the rolling country, cutting first through dense patches of woodland and then through lovely farm and pasture regions.

After they had driven half an hour, Mr. Hollister had to stop for gasoline. He found a garage and pulled up. While an attendant filled the tank, the children got out to stretch their legs. Pete and Ricky wandered around to the rear of the service station, where they saw a tall telephone pole.

"Look, Pete," Ricky said, pointing to the top of it.

"And there's a bird in it, too."

"Do you suppose," Ricky mused aloud, "that storks really don't make any noise?"

"I don't hear any," replied Pete.

"Yikes! I just can't believe it," Ricky replied. "How do they talk to one another?"

"Maybe they use sign language," Pete jested as he returned to the car.

But Ricky lingered behind. When the attendant had been paid and Mr. Hollister was ready to leave, he called, "Everybody inside?"

"All except Ricky," Pam said.

"Where is he?" asked Mrs. Hollister.

"Still watching a stork behind the service station, I'll bet," Pete surmised. "Come on, Ricky! Hurry up!" he called out.

"I—I can't! I'm stuck!" Mr. Hollister hastily got out of the car and, with the attendant and Pete following him, walked around to the rear of the building.

"Here I am! Up here!" Ricky called.

The men looked up the telephone pole. Ricky was clinging to it, halfway to the top!

"Come down here, you imp!" his father commanded.

"I can't, Daddy! I'm really stuck!" Ricky protested.

By now Mrs. Hollister and the girls had left the car and were standing about the base of the pole, looking up at the red-haired boy worriedly.

Ricky, in a faint voice, admitted that he had decided to learn firsthand whether or not storks ever made any noise. And so he had hauled himself up to



*"I'm stuck!"*

the first spike in the pole, then climbed toward the top.

"Goodness!" Mrs. Hollister cried out. "That spike has gone right through your trousers!"

"Yes! That's why I'm stuck!"

The attendant offered to rescue Ricky and quickly climbed the pole. "Hold on," the man directed, then carefully pulled the boy's trousers free of the spike.

Back on the ground Ricky walked sheepishly toward the car, holding one hand over the torn spot in his trousers.

"Ha! Ha!" Sue giggled, and Ricky frowned.

"It isn't funny," the boy said, chagrined.

As they drove along, Mrs. Hollister repaired the rent in Ricky's trousers with a needle and thread from a kit that she carried in her purse.

"Thanks, Mother," Ricky said when she had finished. Suddenly a wide grin spread over his face. "Anyhow, that stork didn't make a sound!"

Just then Pete noticed several cars parked on the road about a quarter of a mile ahead. "Something's happened, Dad! Maybe it's an accident!"

But when Mr. Hollister drove up to the spot, he found two police cars blocking the highway.

"Oh, oh," Ricky said, and slid down to the floor of the car. "I bet they're looking for me because I bothered that stork."

"Don't be silly," Pam said, but had to giggle as she pulled her brother back to his seat.

A policeman came over to the car and spoke to

Mr. Hollister in Danish. "Sorry. I speak only English," Mr. Hollister replied, smiling.

The Dane excused himself, then said in perfect English, "We're looking for a fugitive who stole a model ship from a church down the road."

"Mr. Bushyface!" Holly declared.

"You know something of this?" the officer looked surprised.

The children quickly told all they knew about Mr. Schwartz, and the policeman nodded vigorously.

"That's the man we suspect," he said, "but he seems to be as slippery as an eel."

The officer explained that the meager description the police had of the ship thief tallied with that of the elusive Mr. Schwartz.

"If you should see this fellow anywhere, let us know immediately." The policeman saluted briskly and indicated that the Hollisters might resume their journey.

Not far from Helsingor, the family stopped at a small roadside restaurant. It bore the name *Konditori*. Mrs. Hollister explained that this was a store where lunch, or *frokost*, consisting of sandwiches and sweets, was served.

"Yummy! I'm so hungry!" said Pam. They found a table in the restaurant. Pete was finished first with his delicious *frokost* and asked to be excused.

"Very well," his father replied as Pete rose from the table. "But don't go chasing any storks!"

Pete had something else in mind. He wanted to do

some detective work. The thief the police were looking for might have continued heading north toward Helsingor.

“He could even be hiding around here,” Pete thought. Stepping outside the *Konditori*, he looked up and down the road. No one was in sight. Then the boy found a little-used path leading several hundred yards to the shore of the Oresund.

“It won’t hurt to look around,” he said to himself, and started down the path. Pete had not gone far when he stopped abruptly. The sound of rough voices came from the bushes off to his left. Pete listened with his heart pounding.

“Perhaps they’re the thieves!” he thought.

## CHAPTER 13

### PAM'S CLEVER IDEA

DROPPING quickly to his hands and knees, Pete crawled forward silently toward the spot where he heard the men's voices. As he drew closer, the conversation became louder, but Pete could not make out the muffled words.

"It's not English and doesn't sound like Danish," the boy told himself. He wondered whether they were speaking in French or perhaps in German.

"If I could only get a glimpse of them," Pete thought, "or understand what they're saying."

Cautiously, he raised his eyes over the top of the low bush. Not ten feet in front of him sat two husky men on their haunches. But neither was Schwartz. One of the fellows, Pete noted, wore a tan sweater; the other a gray checked jacket.

Both men were bent over an object which was concealed by their large figures. Pete craned forward. One of the men moved aside slightly and Pete spied it! *A long model ship!*

Then came the sound of splintering wood as the men began to tear the ship apart.

Holding his breath, Pete pondered what to do next. Knowing he would be no match for the pair, the

boy decided to retrace his steps and get help. But, as he backed away slowly, his heel cracked a small twig.

Instantly both men sprang to their feet, scowling fiercely. They advanced toward the spot where Pete crouched. There was only one thing for him to do. He turned and dashed away!

Pete's sudden move startled the thieves so that they hesitated a moment before charging after him in angry pursuit.

"Help, Dad! Help!" Pete cried at the top of his lungs.

Just then the boy tripped over a vine and sprawled into the matted underbrush. His pursuers pounced on him, pinning the struggling boy to the ground.

"Let me go! Help! Dad!" Pete shouted before the man in the tan sweater clamped one hand over his mouth. The other fellow stripped off Pete's belt and tied it around the boy's ankles. Then he pulled off his necktie and secured Pete's wrists with that.

Pete knew immediately what they intended to do. They would tie him up and leave him in the brush, while they escaped.

Suddenly there came the sound of someone racing through the underbrush.

"Dad! Here!" Pete called out wildly.

An instant later Mr. Hollister sprang into view. Sizing up the situation, he dived headlong at the man with the jacket, sending him sprawling.

The fellow in the sweater raced off, leaving his companion to grapple with Mr. Hollister. The two

men thrashed about, first one on top, then the other.

The thief was strong and muscular. He put up a strong fight, but, even so, was no match for athletic Mr. Hollister and soon realized it.

Springing free, the adversary turned to run, but Mr. Hollister leaped forward, grasping him by the coat collar. The man wriggled free, however, leaving Mr. Hollister holding his checked jacket. Then Mr. Hollister quickly freed his son.

"Go get him, Dad!" Pete urged.

But the two men had vanished and the Hollisters' search for them proved futile.

"They probably know the area well," Mr. Hollister commented. "Come on, Pete. We'll report this to the police."

The boy picked up the remains of the ship model and father and son hurried back to the restaurant. Mr. Hollister telephoned the police. In five minutes the same officer who had questioned them on the highway appeared in his prowler car. The officer examined the ship, then shook his head sadly. The crooks, he thought, were undoubtedly heading toward Helsingor, where the road was not blocked.

"We're going to Helsingor," Pete remarked. "So we'll be on the lookout for those fellows." He gave the policeman as accurate a description as he could.

Then Mr. Hollister turned over the gray checked jacket, which had a Paris label in it. The officer felt sure that they had stumbled onto the trail of international crooks. Putting the wrecked ship model into



*The thief was no match for athletic Mr. Hollister.*

the prowler car, he thanked the American family and drove off.

As the travelers continued on their way to Helsingor, they talked about this unexpected new twist in the Danish mystery.

"Perhaps Mr. Bushyface isn't connected with the ship thefts after all," Pam reflected aloud.

"Or he has some other man helping him," Pete ventured. He came forward with an observation that the others had not thought of. Each of the model ships which had been stolen or tampered with was an unusually long one.

"That means," Pam said, "perhaps the crooks are looking for something that wouldn't fit into an ordinary-sized ship model."

"Yikes!" declared Ricky. "It must be a large treasure!"

The Hollisters now were in the area where the boys had seen the mysterious windmill from the air. But, as it was growing late, **their** father decided to keep on going. "Our hotel might not hold our reservations if we're late," he reminded them.

Much to the surprise of the children, Helsingor was larger than it had appeared from the air. It proved to be a thriving city with lovely homes and a busy shopping center. Many boats were moored along the water front. In the distance a large white ferry was heading for the Swedish town of Halsingborg across the narrow Oresund.

The stately Kronborg Castle, its spires towering

into the sky, could be seen from any part of town. Holly pleaded to visit it immediately, but her mother told her that visitors were not allowed at the castle this late in the day.

Mr. Hollister pulled up before a small inn and parked the car. The baggage was carried inside by a young bellhop who ushered the family into three pleasant rooms on the second floor of the brick building.

All but Holly and Sue climbed the narrow stairway. The two younger girls wanted to play in the lobby.

A little later, as Pam was hanging some dresses in her closet, Sue and Holly rushed into the room.

"Mr. Bushyface is downstairs!" cried Holly.

"We even saw his tattoo," said Sue, tugging at Pam's hand. "Come on. Hurry."

When the others heard this, they all dashed downstairs to the registry desk.

"Oh, he's gone!" Holly exclaimed. Breathlessly, she asked the desk clerk, "Where did Mr. Bushyface go?"

The observant clerk said that the bearded man had signed the register as Mr. Julio Bart, but when he noticed Sue and Holly staring at him he picked up his bag and hurried out.

Mr. Hollister immediately notified the police, telling them that one of the suspects was in town.

"They'll check the other hotels here," Mr. Hollister reported after he had hung up.

Just before supper that evening, Pete telephoned the police to ask whether they had located Mr. Bart. No luck. The fugitive, knowing he had been spotted, had probably fled town, and might be hiding out in the countryside.

As the children lingered over their dessert, Pam told the others she had an idea. Since the thieves might be in Helsingor, perhaps they had traced the long model ship they were hunting to this area.

"But do they know which one they're looking for?" her mother queried.

Pam could not be sure. After mulling over the mystery a while longer, she told of another idea which might produce good results. How about telephoning Karen in Copenhagen and asking her to search the libraries in the city for information on Danish model ships?

"Maybe there's an old book," she ventured, "that tells about a treasure hidden in one of those models."

"All right, dear," Mrs. Hollister agreed. "You may do that."

Pam hurried off to make her call and, when she returned, her face was wreathed in smiles. Karen had agreed to spend the evening looking up books on the model ships.

"Crickets!" Pete said with admiration. "Why didn't we think of that before?"

Mr. and Mrs. Hollister praised Pam for her clever idea.

By the time the evening meal was over, it was late.

Mrs. Hollister decided that the children should go to bed so they could get an early start for their visit to Kronborg Castle next morning.

After breakfast, the Americans set off toward the castle, which was within walking distance of the inn.

Pete and Ricky raced on ahead of the others, eager to see the moat which surrounded the ancient fortress. Bright sunshine sparkled on the waters, where four snow-white swans swam about gracefully. Pete was first to reach the bridge over the moat and leaped onto the stone abutment to get a better look at the swans. Ricky followed close behind him.

But looking at swans was not exciting enough for Ricky. He called out, "Come on, Pete! Let's play a game! Make believe you're defending the castle and I'm trying to take it!"

Pete knew they should not wrestle on so precarious a spot. "All right, Ricky," he said. "But let's jump down to the pavement first."

Ricky, however, had already started the game. With his head down, he rushed his brother, grabbing him around the waist with both arms. Pete was thrown off balance. A wild look came into his eyes as he teetered toward the water.

In another second, both boys sailed through the air and landed in the moat with a mighty splash!

## CHAPTER 14

### A GHOST SCARE

WHEN Ricky and Pete hit the water of the moat, the four swans darted off like jet-propelled speedboats.

"Ugh! Glub!" Ricky gurgled as he came to the surface, his nose and mouth full of water. Pete made his way to his brother's side; then, seeing that Ricky was in no danger, he swam beside him to the shore.

"Now we've done it," Pete groaned as the two boys dragged themselves out of the moat. With clothes dripping, they walked back to meet their family.

Other sight-seers, meanwhile, had gathered around, watching the episode. Mrs. Hollister looked dismayed and Mr. Hollister greeted his sons with a stern gaze.

"I'm sorry," Pete apologized.

"Me too, Daddy," Ricky added.

Then Sue piped up. "You shouldn't go swimming without your bathing suits." She looked up at her mother. "I want to go swimming, too, Mommy."

This made Mr. Hollister smile in spite of his annoyance. In fact, Sue's remark set the whole family into peals of laughter, even the bedraggled Pete and Ricky.

Mrs. Hollister declared they would have to postpone their castle visit and return to the inn so the two boys could change into dry clothing.

"If you didn't mean to go swimming, were you trying to catch the swans?" Sue said innocently to Ricky as they walked along. By the time her brother had convinced her that this was not the case, they had arrived at the hotel. They were hardly inside the door when the hall porter called to Pam.

"Miss Hollister," he said. "I have a message for you."

Pam hastened over to the desk by the side of the lobby. The hall porter told her that she had had several urgent telephone calls from Copenhagen. "You are to telephone Miss Karen Clausen immediately," he reported.

The family hastened to their suite of rooms and, while Pete and Ricky changed their clothes, Pam put through a call to Copenhagen. She talked excitedly with Karen for a few minutes, then hung up.

"Mother! Daddy!" Pam said, her eyes shining. "Karen has found a wonderful clue—I mean, part of a clue anyhow."

"What is it?" Pete asked, dashing from his room, buttoning the collar of his fresh shirt.

Karen, Pam reported, had checked several libraries for books about model ships. In one volume she had found reference to a treasure which was said to be hidden in a long ship model.

“But,” Pam went on sadly, “the page telling more about it has been torn out!”

“Oh, how disappointing!” Mrs. Hollister said.

Pam brightened once more. “But guess what!” she said to her family. “Karen found out there’s another copy of that book. And it’s in the Kronborg Castle library!”

“Crickets! Let’s go there right now!” Pete cried out.

Pam told him that tourists were not allowed in the castle library. “But Karen is flying up here today with her brother,” she said. “She’s quite sure she’ll be able to get into the library because she’s a teacher.”

As Karen and Pilot Clausen would not arrive until later in the morning, the Hollisters set off once more to visit Kronborg Castle. This time Pete and Ricky walked quietly beside their parents across the moat and through the huge gate in the wall surrounding the castle.

They were joined by other sight-seers and a guide, who led them into the various huge rooms of the ancient fortress. Pam went up to the guide, a middle-aged Dane with smiling eyes and a deep, booming voice. “Where’s the library, sir?” she asked.

“Ah, we are just passing it now.” He pointed to a pair of large oak doors with a keyhole as large as Pam’s fist. “Only those with special permission are allowed in the library.” He added softly and with a wink, “The ghost lives in there. That is, when he is not sleeping in his chest.”

Several others overheard the remark.

"Yikes!" Ricky exclaimed, full of curiosity. "Where's his chest?"

"Come with me." The guide led the group into an adjacent room. It was a cold and forbidding place with white marble walls and floor. In the center of the room was a long, narrow table surrounded by straight-backed oaken chairs. At one end, a huge chest, also of oak, rested on the floor against the wall.

"There's the chest where the ghost sleeps," said the guide, looking very somber. Holly and Ricky went forward to examine the chest. They noted that the hinges were made of heavy black iron and that a big brass lock clamped the lid firmly in place.

"I guess the ghost can't get out of there," she murmured.

The guide had stepped up behind the two children. "Oh, but sometimes you can hear the ghost stirring," he told her. Holly bent her head close to the top of the ancient chest. Suddenly she heard a tapping sound, then a thin reedy voice whispering:

"Let me out! Let me out!"

Holly jumped back and shrieked. "Oo—oh! The ghost!"

"I heard it, too!" Ricky said, his eyes wide with astonishment.

But no one else, not even Sue, seemed frightened. As the guide, who was now chuckling, led them from the room, Pam took Holly and Ricky aside. "Don't



*"Let me out! Let me out!"*

be afraid. That wasn't a ghost. It was our guide. He's a ventriloquist."

Holly and Ricky breathed a sigh of relief. "Am I glad to hear that!" Ricky declared.

Just the same, both he and Holly stayed close to Pam as they climbed a long stone staircase which led to a tower. Sunlight streamed through casement windows looking out over the Oresund. The visitors crowded close to the casements to view the lovely panorama.

Far in the distance across the thin strip of water, they could see the coast of Sweden. On the Danish side, high on a bluff, a row of ancient cannons pointed out at the water. Behind them, a sentry marched back and forth, always turning with a click of the heels in front of his sentry house.

The guide explained that in olden times these same cannons were used to control the shipping which plied back and forth through the narrow waters between the Baltic and the North seas.

"All ship captains had to pay tribute to the ruler," he told them. "But, of course, that is not the case any more."

As the guide continued to tell about the old Scandinavian wars, Pete suddenly stiffened. His eyes widened, and he pointed toward the battlement.

"What's the matter?" asked Pam. "Do you see the ghost?"

"This is no ghost!" Pete whispered and tapped

his father's arm. "Dad, do you recognize that fellow near the next to last cannon?"

Mr. Hollister looked out the tower window, his jaw set grimly. "How could I forget him!"

*The man standing by the cannon was the one who had wrestled with Mr. Hollister!* The fellow had no jacket and his shirt was torn. He faced the water and was holding a pair of binoculars to his eyes.

"Oh!" Pam said. "He seems to be signaling to someone out there in that black speedboat with the red stripe." The man on the battlement had raised his arm and waved it three times.

As the Hollisters watched tensely, the man in the speedboat responded with a similar signal.

"Come on, Dad. Let's get that ship thief!" Pete urged.

Hurrying off ahead of the others, Mr. Hollister and his two sons retraced their way down the steps and soon were outside the castle.

Mr. Hollister sprinted toward the fellow and hit him hard with a flying tackle. The man hit the ground, his binoculars flying from his hands.

When he tried to rise, Pete and Ricky grabbed either arm and held on tight.

Seeing the commotion, the sentry hastened down from his post.

"You must hold this man for the police," Mr. Hollister said, and told what had happened the day before.

The sentry immediately took charge of the captive and put in a call for the local police.

By now Mrs. Hollister and Pam had arrived on the scene. They all took turns questioning the prisoner.

Was he working with someone named either Bart or Schwartz? What were the thieves looking for when they stole the church ships? And, were they also in league to steal the valuable mermaids? Was the man in the black boat one of the thieves?

When the prisoner remained silent, Mrs. Hollister suggested that perhaps he did not speak English. So the sentry asked him the same questions in Danish, German, and French. But the fellow shook his head sullenly and would not reply in any language. Nor would he identify himself.

Five minutes later the police arrived and took the prisoner in tow.

"Please let us know what you learn about this suspect," Mr. Hollister said to one of the officers, and gave him their address in Helsingor.

After the castle tour was over, the Hollisters returned to their hotel for lunch. As they sat in the dining room, Karen Clausen and her brother came in.

"We got here as quickly as we could," Karen said breathlessly. She introduced Eric Clausen to Mr. and Mrs. Hollister and the three girls, who had not yet met him.

Karen then excitedly told the family she had obtained permission to visit the library of Kronborg Castle. The children clamored to go with her.

Karen shook her head. "I'm sorry, but I'm allowed to take only one visitor." She suggested that Pam accompany her, as it had been Pam's idea that had led them to the clue.

The Clausens joined the Hollisters for lunch. During the meal they told Karen and her brother of the morning's excitement.

That afternoon, while Mr. Clausen joined the other Hollisters in sight-seeing about the town of Helsingor, Karen and Pam set off for the castle library.

"How do we get in, Karen?" Pam inquired as they made their way across the moat and into the castle grounds.

"I'll show you," Karen said. She stopped and opened her large purse. In it was the biggest key that Pam had ever seen. Made of brass, it looked as if it weighed several pounds.

"This will open the door," Karen said. She explained that she had received it from the Kronborg officials.

"They warned me," Karen continued, "to be on the lookout for any prowlers." And she added, "A man tried to break into the library yesterday, but of course he couldn't open the doors. A tourist reported him."

Not wanting to attract attention, Pam and Karen waited outside the library doors until there were no visitors in sight. Then the Danish girl put the key into the lock and turned it. There was a sharp *click*.

The oak doors swung slowly open, and the two stepped inside. With another *click*, Karen locked the massive doors.

The ancient library was cool and smelled musty. Its great bookshelves extended from the floor to the ceiling on all four walls. There were several tables and chairs in the middle of the stone floor and, about them, as if guarding the gloomy place, were six replicas of bygone Danish knights.

The iron figures stood stiff and tall in their burnished armor. One of them held a spear pointed at the girls. Another poised a war club high over his head.

"This is sp—spooky," Pam said, glancing about. "I'd almost believe a ghost could live here."

"Don't worry, dear." Karen chuckled. "There's nothing to fear."

Pam now looked at the seemingly endless collection of books and asked, "Where shall we start?"

"I have a diagram of the library shelves." Karen pulled a piece of paper from her purse. Then she pointed to the far wall. "The book we want should be right over there on one of the lower shelves."

But the search was not so easy as they had hoped. Both Karen and Pam pulled book after book from the dusty shelves, but with no success.

Karen sighed. "I didn't know it would take us so long."

Pam was not discouraged, however. Perhaps the

volume they wanted was on a higher shelf. The girl went to a section of books near a window.

Standing on tiptoe, Pam reached up as far as she could. In her effort to pull out one of the books, she lost her balance and accidentally stumbled against an armored knight.

“Oh!” Pam jumped aside, startled. The next instant there was a tremendous crash and a hollow clanking din filled the ancient castle library!

## CHAPTER 15

### AERIAL SCOUTS

PAM and Karen both shrieked with fright. Wheeling about, they saw the knight in armor face down on the stone floor. Then a loud pounding sounded on the door.

“What’s going on in there?” someone shouted in Danish.

Karen shakily took the key from her purse and inserted it in the lock. The doors swung open to reveal one of the castle guards. He stepped inside and looked inquiringly about the room. “I thought I heard an explosion!”

Karen told him about the mishap and Pam apologized for bumping into the iron figure. “I hope the knight isn’t damaged,” she said. To the girls’ relief, the guard, having examined the armor, reported that no harm had been done.

“It wasn’t really your fault,” the guard told Pam. “This knight was cleaned several days ago, and was not fastened securely to his place. So a little bump would easily knock him over.”

With the help of Pam and Karen, the guard lifted the fallen knight back on his feet.

“Have you found the book you were looking for?”

the guard asked the girls. Karen replied no, but they hoped to find it soon.

"You had better hurry," the guard advised. "This room must soon be closed for the day."

Pam and Karen thanked him and returned to their search.

Back in the town of Helsingor, meanwhile, the other Hollisters had divided into two sight-seeing groups. Mr. and Mrs. Hollister, along with Holly and Sue, went to visit a museum to look at a famous collection of Danish dolls. Pete and Ricky, with Mr. Clausen as their guide, planned to walk down to the water front to watch the ferryboat from Sweden arrive.

Before leaving, Pete decided to check with the police again. Perhaps they had finally learned something from their captive. The officer taking Pete's call told the boy that the prisoner still refused to talk. Police records, however, proved him to be Gruning, a Swiss national, who once had been convicted for smuggling watches.

Pete excitedly relayed this information to Ricky and Mr. Clausen as they left. Upon their arrival at the dock, the big white ferry was just pulling in. As the trio watched the passengers debark, the Danish man inquired, "Tell me, Ricky and Pete, just where did you see the black speedboat that Gruning was signaling?"

"Right out there," Pete said. He and Ricky pointed to the spot.

"I'm sure," the flyer went on, "if we could only

find the boat, we might learn more about the ring of thieves."

"It sped away as soon as we nabbed that Swiss fellow," Pete said. "So we don't know where it went."

"How would you boys like to look for it in my airplane?" Mr. Clausen proposed.

"Crickets!" Pete exclaimed. "An aerial search! That would be keen, Mr. Clausen!"

"Can we go right away?" Ricky asked.

The pilot said yes. He had left his plane at a small airstrip on the outskirts of Helsingor.

"But first we must leave a note for your parents," he reminded them.

The three hastened to the hotel, where Pete wrote a note telling his mother and father where they would be, and left it with the clerk. Then the Hollisters and the pilot hopped into a cab and soon were at the small airport. It was located adjacent to a flat strip of farmland lying west of Helsingor.

"Good," Mr. Clausen said as they hastened toward his airplane. "They're refueling it as I asked them to."

An attendant was just climbing down from the wing, a gasoline hose in one hand. The two men spoke in Danish, and the pilot turned to the boys. "She's all ready to fly."

He opened the door of the airplane, and Pete and Ricky climbed in. The little airport was not large enough for a radio tower, and Eric Clausen used hand signals to get clearance from the airport manager. Then he headed his airplane down the grassy

runway. With engine humming, the pilot pulled back slowly on the stick and the plane rose gracefully into the air.

Soon they were headed out over the water. When they reached the middle of the Oresund, the pilot turned south, flying as low as regulations allowed.

“Keep a lookout for the black speedboat!” he told the boys.

Pete and Ricky pressed their faces to the windows of the airplane, their eyes scanning the waters near the shore. There were boats of many sizes and colors, but not the black one with the red stripe which they had seen from the castle.

After continuing southward for a few minutes, Mr. Clausen made a “U” turn and started north again. Back and forth he scouted, but with no luck.

“Maybe the crooks put their craft in a boathouse,” Pete ventured.

“Or perhaps we didn’t fly far enough south,” was the pilot’s guess.

He turned around and this time flew farther to the south. Presently the boys recognized the area where they had seen the strange windmill. Just then Ricky spied a small black speck in the distance, leaving a wake behind it like a tiny white plume.

“Maybe that’s it!” he shouted, pointing down at the water.

When Mr. Clausen flew directly over the boat, Pete turned to the pilot. “That’s it all right! That’s the one!”

"We'll keep an eye on him," Mr. Clausen said. He banked the plane and, as he did, the three aerial scouts saw the red-striped black boat pull alongside a dock.

"Crickets! That's near the place where Dad and I found the model ship robbers."

"Are you sure, Pete?"

"Positive. And there's the little restaurant where we had lunch."

"It sure is!" Ricky cried above the throb of the motor.

Just then Mr. Clausen sighted the odd windmill. All the other windmills in sight were turning. This one was not. "Maybe this does tie in with your mystery, boys."

"It must be a signal," Pete said, convinced of their previous speculation.

Just then Ricky cried out, "Look, a man is walking out on the dock. Now he's loading something into the speedboat." But whatever the fellow was carrying could not be seen distinctly from the air.

"Yikes! I hope they don't notice we're spying on them," Ricky added.

Mr. Clausen said that he would fly in wider circles so the men below would not become suspicious. Round and round the airplane flew, with Pete and Ricky keeping their eyes glued to the scene.

"I wonder what they're up to," the pilot mused aloud. Suddenly he said, "Oh, oh! What was that?"

All three listened intently. The motor was sput-

tering. It caught hold for moment, then sputtered again. Pete and Ricky could see the twirling of the propeller slow down.

"Looks like we have a little engine trouble, boys," the pilot said. "But don't worry. We'll be able to land safely. It is all flat pasture land around here."

Neither Pete nor Ricky felt any fear; they had confidence in Mr. Clausen. Handling his airplane expertly, he glided in toward a wide field. On the way down, Pete exclaimed, "The black boat! It's pulling away from the dock."

"Why don't you radio the police," Ricky suggested, "so they can catch those men?"

The pilot said he was afraid to do this for fear the black boat might have a radio, too, and pick up his warning.

"The less they know about us, the better," Mr. Clausen added.

The airplane continued its long, low glide. It skimmed over the rooftops of several farmhouses. The ground seemed to rush up faster and faster as the small craft settled down over a long green pasture adjacent to the odd windmill. In the meadow a herd of cows browsed beneath a cluster of trees.

"I hope we don't frighten them," the pilot said.

"You mean they might run away?" asked Ricky.

Mr. Clausen did not have a chance to reply because one of the animals, alarmed by the noise, ran directly into the path of the landing airplane!

"Hold tight!" the pilot called out. He tilted his



*"Hold tight!" the pilot called out.*

plane until it seemed as if the left wing tip would hit the ground first. The wheels of the craft skimmed over the top of the cow's head. Then Mr. Clausen righted the plane again and it settled on the field.

"Yikes!" Ricky cried out. "We've never jumped over a cow before!"

When the airplane had rolled to a stop, the pilot opened the door and stepped out, a small tool kit in his hands. Pete and Ricky followed. After working on the engine for a while, the flyer announced, "That will fix it, boys. I replaced a bad spark plug."

Pete asked if they might investigate the strange windmill before they took off again, but Mr. Clausen advised, "First we'd better return to Helsingor and notify the police about that black boat."

When all three had returned to their places in the airplane, Mr. Clausen started it. The propeller whirled rapidly. Just then the door of the windmill opened and a man ran out.

"He's headed right for us," Ricky said.

"I wonder what he wants." Pete looked curiously at the approaching figure.

"A few minutes more delay won't hurt, I guess," Mr. Clausen said. "If that fellow does want to speak to us, maybe we can ask some questions about the windmill."

The man ran across the pasture with amazing speed. He was small and thin and had a hooked nose. As Mr. Clausen got up and opened the door of the

airplane, the man cried out in English, "You're trespassing! I'll have you arrested!"

"It was an emergency landing," the pilot explained calmly. "We're sorry we landed on your field. We will take off right away, with no harm done to your pasture."

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" yelled the man, waving his arms. "You'll stay right here until I get the police!"

"He's stalling for time," Pete told himself. "Perhaps the gang ordered him to delay us."

Quickly the boy whispered his suspicion to the pilot.

"Just what I was thinking," Mr. Clausen replied in a low voice.

The pilot leaned toward the door and shouted his determination to take off from the pasture. This angered the fellow even more. He ran up closer to the plane and shook a bony fist at the occupants. "You're spying on us again!"

## CHAPTER 16

### LUCKY DUCKS

THE pilot slammed the door, hopped into his seat, and started the plane rolling over the pasture.

Pete and Ricky looked on, excited. Did the stranger really know them? Why was he trying to keep the plane from flying off?

"I'll bet he's in Mr. Schwartz's gang," Pete surmised.

"Yes, and Mr. Bushyface told him about us," Ricky added.

"I am sure you boys are right," Mr. Clausen commented tersely.

"Yikes! Look what he's trying to do!" Ricky pointed ahead. The scrawny man had raced over to the cows and was driving the animals into the path of the airplane!

"I thought he might try that trick," the flyer said. "We will fool him. I am heading downwind now. Watch this!"

Applying the left wheel brake and kicking the rudder at the same time, Mr. Clausen turned the craft completely about and sped off in the opposite direction. Soon they were airborne.

"Hurray! Hurray! Good for you, Mr. Clausen!" Ricky shouted. The pilot, circling to gain altitude, flew over the dock where they had seen the black speedboat being loaded.

"It's gone!" Ricky cried out.

"But where?" Pete asked.

"We'll find it!" Mr. Clausen said grimly as he flew out over the water. Then he glanced at his gasoline gauge and added, "We can't search too long, boys. We're getting low on fuel."

The pilot crisscrossed the waters of the narrow strait, heading northward at each turn in search of the black speedboat. In a few minutes they approached an area dotted with craft of all kinds. Some, with gaily colored sails, tacked back and forth among scores of rowboats.

As Mr. Clausen dipped the plane lower, Pete shouted, "There's a black one. It just passed between those yellow sailboats!"

Ricky and the pilot looked down to the spot where Pete was pointing. Darting on ahead, a dark speedboat churned up the water. Was this their quarry?

Again the flyer nosed the plane downward. Now they could see the two occupants clearly. The steersman guided the boat to an open stretch of water. He slackened speed. The black boat stopped and the second passenger threw an anchor over the side.

When the plane was directly overhead, Ricky cried, "Jimminy! They're only boys!"

As the plane soared on, the youngsters in the craft below put fishing poles over the gunwales.

"Those fellows really had us fooled," Pete said glumly.

"I hope we find the right boat soon," Mr. Clausen declared, eyeing the fuel gauge worriedly.

Suddenly Pete spotted another black speedboat farther ahead. "This time I'm sure!" he shouted. "I can see a red stripe on the side!" In the distance the fugitive craft was streaking toward a large gray freighter moving slowly northward in the middle of the Oresund.

Now the motorboat drew alongside the freighter. Several tiny figures hurried about on the liner's deck, and a rope ladder was dropped over the side.

The pilot banked his plane so they all could get a better view. Suddenly a man climbed down the rope ladder. The fellow in the speedboat handed him a package.

"I'll bet they're smugglers!" Pete cried out, excited.

Mr. Clausen dipped his plane lower, swinging about the back end of the big ship. The name of the craft stood out boldly.

The *Madagascar*!

"Look!" Pete cried. "It's the same ship that nearly ran down *Farfar's* sailboat! The windmill must have been sending a signal to it!"

The speedboat pushed off from the *Madagascar* and made a beeline toward the Danish shore.

"Can you follow it, Mr. Clausen?" Pete asked.

The pilot shook his head. "I am afraid not. I have only enough fuel to take us to the airport."

The boys were disappointed, but agreed with Mr. Clausen that safety came first. The gas gauge showed empty just as the pilot set the plane down safely on the landing field outside Helsingor.

Alighting, Pete, Ricky, and the pilot hurried to the small administration building. "Let's phone the police right now," Pete suggested.

"Very well. This way, boys. There is a booth in the office."

Mr. Clausen put in the call, but he got a busy signal. A few minutes later he tried again, with the same result.

"We had better not wait here any longer," he told Pete and Ricky. "We will report to the police from your hotel."

A taxi, which had just discharged a passenger at the airport, took the trio to Helsingor in fast time. As the pilot paid the driver, Mr. and Mrs. Hollister hurried from the inn.

Pete instantly noticed a strained, anxious look on their faces. "What's wrong?" he asked.

"Sue and Holly are lost!" Mrs. Hollister replied, her voice trembling. "We can't find them anywhere." She said that after they had left the museum together, Holly and Sue asked to play in front of the hotel.

"When your father and I came out just now to get them, the girls were gone!"

"Let's all hunt for them," Ricky urged.

Immediately the Hollisters and Mr. Clausen set out. As they all hurried along the sidewalk, at times calling Sue's and Holly's names, Pete related in snatches what had happened on the aerial search.

"I'm sure," said Mr. Hollister grimly, "that Mr. Schwartz and his pals are up to no good!"

Presently, when there was still no sign of the two missing girls, the searchers paused at a cross street. They decided to separate. Two groups, looking in different areas, might have better luck.

Pete and Ricky would remain with Mr. Clausen while Mr. and Mrs. Hollister went off in the other direction.

"Shall we meet at this corner in ten minutes?" Mr. Clausen suggested.

"Good idea," agreed Mr. Hollister, and the two men checked their wrist watches.

The flyer led the boys along a street lined with shops. Pete and Ricky looked into each one. No sisters.

Finally Mr. Clausen pointed to a store with a display window full of little statues. "That is the shop from which a Little Mermaid figurine was nearly stolen."

Pete, remembering the newspaper report, secretly wondered if his sisters were in the shop doing some sleuthing. But his hopes were in vain. The proprietor, a stout little man with a handle-bar mustache, said he had seen neither Holly nor Sue.

Stepping out of the store, Ricky suddenly spied a

sweet shop a few doors ahead. The girls might have gone there! He and Pete ran into the place.

"Did two girls come in here? Holly and Sue Hollister are their names!" Ricky inquired of the shopkeeper.

But the man, who could not understand a word of English, thought Ricky wanted some sweets. He was showing the boys trays of candies when Mr. Clausen entered and spoke to the man in Danish. No, the proprietor had not seen the girls. He was sorry to hear they were lost, so sorry that he gave Pete and Ricky each a licorice stick.

The ten minutes were almost up as they left the shop, and the three hastened to meet Mr. and Mrs. Hollister. They, too, had been unsuccessful. "We may as well stay together this time," Mr. Hollister suggested.

The search now narrowed to the water front section, where the ferryboat dock was located.

"Crickets!" Pete exclaimed. "Do you think Holly and Sue took a ferryboat ride to Sweden?"

His mother looked more worried than ever as she gazed out over the water. Just then everyone saw the white ferryboat slicing the water back toward Denmark.

"Maybe the girls took a round-trip ride," Ricky suggested. "Lucky ducks!"

As the big boat glided into a landing at the dock, the Hollisters, hoping against hope, scanned the rail. They did not see the two girls. Even when the gang-

plank was lowered and the passengers began to step off, there was no sign of Holly and Sue.

Suddenly Pete called out, "Mother! Dad! I see them! Look!"

A tall, handsome man wearing captain's bars on his white uniform walked down the gangway. He carried Sue in his left arm, and held Holly by the hand.

"Oh, thank goodness!" Mrs. Hollister murmured as she ran forward to meet them.

"Mommy!" Sue exclaimed, wriggling down from the officer's arms. "We had a *wonderful* ride and Captain Falck gave us a box of candy 'cause we're Americans!"

Holly introduced Captain Falck to her family and Mr. Clausen. As the Captain could not speak English well, he told the pilot in Danish, "The little girls boarded my ferry to explore it and did not have enough time to get off before we sailed."

Mrs. Hollister thanked the man for his kindness. When he had left, Holly said to her mother and father, "I guess you're going to spank us. We promise never to run away into another country again."

Their parents, however, did not spank the two run-aways. Instead they hugged them again and started for their hotel. In the lobby they met Pam and Karen.

Even before Holly and Sue could tell about their adventure, Pam cried out, "Mother! Dad! We've made a great discovery!"



*"I see them," Pete called out.*

## CHAPTER 17

### AN OLD RUIN

"YOU'LL never guess what we found at Kronborg Castle!" Pam cried.

"I know!" Ricky said. "The old king's ghost!"

Pam was too excited to notice her brother's teasing. She took a deep breath. "Karen and I discovered the secret of the church ships!"

There was an amazed chorus of "Oh!" "Tell us quick!" "What is it?" Pam's eyes sparkled. "The secret is a prince's scepter covered with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. It's hidden in one of the long model ships." Karen, she said, had finally found the book with this information in the castle library.

"This scepter," Karen took up the story, "was placed in a church ship many years ago. The model, according to the book, was donated by a prince, who put his scepter inside a false bottom to hide it from invaders who were threatening Denmark."

The kindergarten mistress explained that the story had been passed down from generation to generation, until it was thought to be merely a myth.

"The scepter has never been found," Pam put in.

Ricky whistled. "Boy! Those thieves must believe the story—and are looking for the treasure."

Holly's eyes had been growing bigger and bigger. Now she burst out, "Let's find it before those mean men do!"

"But where is the old church?" Pete asked.

Karen said she had figured from the story in the book that it might be located in a nearby town. She went on to relate something else which was quite mysterious. Instead of hanging from the church ceiling, the model ship with the scepter in it had been hidden in another spot.

How the Hollisters wished they could guess where! They had to act quickly, Karen reminded them, because of the pages that had been torn from a similiar book in Copenhagen. "Mr. Schwartz and his gang probably know as much about the treasure by now as we do," she said.

But it was too late in the day to begin the search. Karen and her brother decided to take rooms in the inn overnight so they could join in the next day's adventure.

Pete, meanwhile, phoned the police to report their suspicions about the black speedboat and the *Madagascar*. The local chief promised to notify crown authorities to check on the freighter before she left Danish waters. Would Pete and Mr. Clausen contact headquarters next morning?

"Yes sir," Pete replied. "We'll be there in person."

Early next morning the Hollisters met Karen and Mr. Clausen in the dining room for breakfast. After a

hurried meal, Mr. Hollister urged, "Let's get started!"

Pete and the pilot departed for police headquarters while the others set out to find the old church.

"We'll see you later," Pete said as Mr. Clausen hailed a taxicab.

Karen and the rest of the Hollisters crowded into the station wagon and soon left Helsingor behind them. The road was such a twisting one that it reminded Holly of the switchback at Tivoli.

Fifteen minutes later, as the car reached the top of a small hill, the passengers saw a little town in the distance.

"That's the place," Karen said.

"But I don't see any church spire," Pam remarked doubtfully.

Mr. Hollister stopped at the outskirts of the town, where Karen questioned a Danish boy on a bicycle. He knew where the church was and directed her to it.

After turning several corners, Mr. Hollister pulled up in front of a church with low, modern lines.

"This isn't an ancient church," Ricky complained. "It's new!"

"I can't understand it!" Karen frowned, perplexed. She and Pam hopped out to ask questions of several passers-by.

"Oh, Mother! Dad!" Pam wailed, returning to the car. "Such terrible luck! The old church burned down a few years ago." The original building, the girls reported, had been located several blocks away.

"Let's go there anyway and look around," Ricky proposed, and everyone agreed.

When they reached the place, Karen gasped. The Hollisters stared in dismay. Before them was a mass of rubble, broken stone, and tall weeds. Tears came into Pam's eyes. After all their sleuthing, this was the end of the trail!

"Poof!" said Ricky, snapping his fingers. "There goes our mystery!"

"No, it doesn't," Holly insisted. "We can search some more. Let's, Daddy!"

Mr. Hollister said they might as well, but doubted that they would find any clues in the burned-out remains of the old church.

The children ran to the broken, blackened bricks, which once had served as the foundation of the ancient building. Carefully they probed among the ruins.

"I'm afraid anything made of wood certainly would have been completely destroyed," Karen said sadly.

But Pam, Ricky, Holly, and Sue, undaunted, stubbornly continued to search in the rubble. A group of curious local children had gathered to watch.

Ricky now climbed atop a high pile of old bricks. He removed several, peering down in the chinks between them. In doing so, he dislodged a large chunk of bricks. It teetered, then tumbled down toward Sue and Holly, who were standing below.

"Look out!" Mrs. Hollister screamed.

Hand in hand, the sisters jumped nimbly out of the way.

*Crash!* The bricks landed inches from them.

"Oh, dear!" Mrs. Hollister breathed a sigh of relief. "I think we'd better leave before someone gets hurt."

"But the precious scepter might still be here," Pam said wistfully.

"I'll be more careful, Mom," Ricky pleaded.

Just then Pam had another idea. Approaching the onlooking Danish youngsters, she asked if any of them spoke English well. One girl her own age named Hilda replied that she did. Hilda had lived in England for three years.

"Do you know if anybody ever found a treasure in this church?" Pam questioned. The Danish girl shook her head.

"No," she answered, "but some men have been looking for one."

The answer electrified Pam and the others. "When?"

"Earlier this morning. Two men were here looking around the ruins just as you are."

"Did they have beards?"

"No."

"Are you sure they didn't find anything?" queried Holly.

"I am certain," Hilda smiled. "We children have looked around these ruins many times. Besides, all



*"Look out!" Mrs. Hollister screamed.*

the good things were carted away during the fire.”

“What things?” Ricky wanted to know.

“The church ornaments and the ships.”

Pam’s spine tingled with excitement. “Ships! Were there more than one?”

“Yes,” Hilda replied. “Two.” One had hung from the church ceiling, she said. The other vessel had been kept in a secret crypt which only the pastor knew about.

“A secret crypt!” Karen declared. “Pam, that’s the place the old book meant. Our search may be nearly over!”

Karen then asked Hilda where the ships had been taken.

“To the museum in Helsingor,” she replied.

“Did those two men learn this?” Pam inquired quickly.

“Yes, we told them.”

“Schwartz’s helpers, no doubt,” Mr. Hollister remarked. The same thought ran through the searchers’ minds. The fellows probably had raced directly to Helsingor. The pair might at this very moment be looking for the scepter in the town’s museum!

“Oh, Dad. We must hurry!” Pam urged.

The Hollisters and Karen thanked Hilda and dashed back to the station wagon. If only something had prevented the two thieves from arriving at the museum first!

The travelers were tense with excitement on the return trip to Helsingor. Soon the towers of Kron-

borg Castle appeared in the distance. Reaching town, Mr. Hollister drove, at Karen's direction, straight to the museum.

"Oh!" Sue squealed. "Look at all the people!"

Sure enough, a large crowd had gathered in front of the building. Just as Mr. Hollister stopped his car, a police automobile pulled up. Two officers stepped out. With them were Pete and Mr. Clausen!

"Pete!" Ricky called. "What happened?"

"The museum has been robbed."

By this time everyone had jumped out of the station wagon. Fearfully Pam asked, "What was stolen?"

"A couple of church ships," Pete replied.

Pam's heart sank. Mr. Schwartz's men, she thought, had made off with the precious model—and the prince's scepter—after all!

Just to make certain, the girl, followed by her family and the Clausens, went with the two policemen into the museum. Karen interpreted as Pam asked about the ships.

Karen's grave expression told her the answer even before the teacher said, "Yes, a man broke in and got away with the relics."

The two officers, named Jensen and Halker, told how the museum custodian had tried to stop the thief, but with no luck. The thief had dashed into the street, hopped onto the rear seat of a motor scooter, and been driven off by a second man.

The custodian himself now stepped forward.

"There's no telling where they went," he said sadly in Danish.

When Karen translated this, Pete's eyes brightened. He snapped his fingers. "I'll bet I know."

"Where?" Officer Jensen asked.

Pete surmised that the thieves might be heading for the black speedboat in an effort to escape either to the *Madagascar* or even to Sweden.

"But the *Madagascar* is probably in the North Sea by this time," Mr. Hollister said.

"No, Dad, she isn't!" exclaimed Pete. "The police told us this morning that a Danish patrol boat had stopped the *Madagascar* in the Skagerrak.

"That's right," Mr. Clausen added. "The patrol boat is awaiting further word from the police."

"Come," Officer Halker said. "Show us where you first saw the black boat."

Pete, Ricky, and Mr. Clausen jumped into the police car, while the rest went with Mr. Hollister. With the officers leading the way, the cars sped south out of Helsingor.

"This is keen!" Ricky declared as Officer Halker drove along a beautiful strip of shore front known as the Danish Riviera.

"We're getting close to the place now," Pete said finally. He glanced back at his father, who was doing his best to keep up with the speedy police car.

"Boy! Dad looks like a racing driver!" Ricky remarked.

A few moments later Pete directed, "Turn left here. The dock's over there."

The two cars came to a stop beside the dock which the boys had seen from the air.

*The black motorboat was still there.*

The policemen, Pete, Ricky, and Mr. Clausen got out and looked around. No one seemed to be aboard the craft.

"Do you suppose the thieves haven't arrived yet?" Mr. Clausen asked, puzzled.

"This is most strange," Jensen said. The officers searched the motorboat, but found nothing unusual in it.

Then Pete noticed an old man walking near the road. "Maybe he knows something about the thieves!"

When the policemen questioned the man, he replied in Danish and pointed south along the highway.

Mr. Clausen, translating the man's words, said that the motor scooter, with two men on it, had stopped briefly at the dock. Then apparently the riders had changed their minds and sped off down the road toward Copenhagen.

"Were they carrying model church ships?" Ricky asked.

"Yes."

The police immediately jumped back into their auto. The boys and Mr. Clausen followed. As their car passed the Hollisters' station wagon, Pete shouted, "Dad, come on! We're after the thieves!"

## CHAPTER 18

### GIFT FROM A QUEEN

THE police car and the station wagon sped toward Copenhagen. They passed bicycles, motorcycles, and autos. But the motor scooter was not in sight.

Finally Officer Halker stopped his car at the roadside, as did Mr. Hollister. The two policemen conferred in Danish. Then Officer Jensen spoke into the radio.

"They're calling for a road block five miles ahead," Mr. Clausen whispered to Pete and Ricky.

"Phew! That scooter must have wings!" Ricky declared.

The word *wings* reminded Pete of the mysterious windmill. They were in the area near it now. He glanced about. There was the mill, off to the right.

"Look!" Pete cried to the officers, pointing. "There's the odd windmill I told you about!"

"That's right," Pilot Clausen agreed.

"Yikes! Maybe the crooks are hiding in there!" Ricky exclaimed.

Officer Halker said that the road leading from the windmill to the main highway was several hundred yards ahead of them. "We'll investigate it."

Motioning for Mr. Hollister to follow close behind, Officer Halker started his car again. As he neared the side road, Pete yelled, "There they are!" Two men on a motor scooter were coming out of the road, moving cautiously.

With a burst of speed, the police car blocked the vehicle's path. The officers jumped out and ordered the riders to stop.

"Say! What's this all about?" demanded the taller of the two men as they both dismounted.

"He's an American!" Ricky stated, looking at the man closely. "And he sounds just like Mr. Bushyface, only now he doesn't have a beard!"

"What are these kids talking about?" the man scowled. His companion said nothing, but glared at the Hollisters.

"I know him too!" Pete pointed at the silent man. "He's the one who tied me up!"

"These kids are balmy," the American growled.

"No, we're not, Mr. Schwartz," Ricky replied. "We know that you're both crooks!"

Officer Jensen searched the tall man, who had started violently when Ricky called him Mr. Schwartz. The fellow had no concealed weapons. But from a trouser pocket, the policeman pulled a false, black beard!

"See! What did I tell you!" Ricky said.

"Put it on," Officer Jensen ordered the captive.

Sullenly, the suspect did this. As he did, the boys suddenly noticed something on his right hand.

*The flag tattoo!*

"Oh," Sue piped up, "they've caught the bad man!" The rest of her family and Karen had stepped from the station wagon and now approached the two prisoners.

"That's your man all right," Mr. Hollister spoke up. "He's the Mr. Schwartz who was on our overseas plane."

"You've got nothing on me," the prisoner blustered.

Officer Jensen continued the search. From another pocket he pulled out a black ivory penknife.

"My knife!" Pete declared joyfully. The boy added, "There's positive proof." He turned to Mr. Schwartz. "So you were the one on the bench in Tivoli. You fooled us then because you took off the beard."

The captured man scowled, but his defiance crumpled when the officers searched his wallet and found a passport bearing the name of Pancho Schwartz.

Just then the second prisoner made a bolt for freedom. Officer Halker leaped toward him, bringing him down with one blow of his right hand.

The fellow rolled to the ground, muttering something in French; then, half-dazed, he got to his feet.

He and Mr. Schwartz made no further resistance as they were handcuffed.

"Where is the stolen scepter and the Little Mermaid figurine—the *real* one?" demanded Pam, look-



*“Oh,” Sue piped up, “they’ve caught the bad man!”*

ing Mr. Schwartz straight in the eye. But he evaded her glance.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said stubbornly.

Even after intensive questioning by the policemen, both men denied any knowledge of the missing articles.

"Let's search the windmill," Pete suggested. "I'm sure they're hiding something there."

While Officer Halker stayed to guard the prisoners, Policeman Jensen and the others walked up to the door of the windmill. The officer stepped inside, where a thin, scrawny man was stacking cheeses in racks. The fellow wheeled about. Seeing the policeman, he dashed toward another exit.

"Catch him!" Pete called out. "He's the one who tried to wreck our plane!"

"Halt!"

The fellow cringed at the policeman's stern command and stopped. The thin man blanched and whimpered, "I didn't plan to drive the cows in front of your plane. I—I was just fooling. I'm innocent. Believe me."

"Some joke that is." Eric Clausen looked angrily at the man.

When questioned about Schwartz and his companion, the third prisoner denied knowing them. He said his name was Smith and that he had come to Denmark to visit relatives.

"Where did these cheeses come from?" Mr.

Clausen questioned. "And what are they doing here?"

The prisoner explained that they were merely stored in the old windmill until shipped to market. But the Dane did not believe this. He reminded the others of the mysterious contrary motions of the blades.

"Let us search this place," the pilot suggested.

Together with the Hollister children and his sister Karen, Mr. Clausen led the way through the old windmill, while Officer Jensen held Smith captive.

It was Holly who stumbled upon a large object covered with burlap. Upon lifting the cloth, a motor and pulley were revealed!

"So," the pilot said, "this is how the blades were made to turn, regardless of the wind."

Excitedly, the group continued its hunt.

It was Pete who made the next startling discovery.

"Look here, Officer Jensen!" he called out, lifting another burlap cover. Underneath it was a heap of broken wood.

The policeman, still holding his captive, examined the pieces. "The stolen church ships!" exclaimed the officer.

"I didn't do it! I didn't do it!" Smith protested.

"Where is the scepter?" Jensen demanded as he snapped handcuffs on the scrawny man.

"And the mermaid figurine?" Karen added.

"I don't know! Believe me!"

The children searched the entire windmill again.

but there was no sign of either the scepter or the stolen mermaid.

Suddenly Pam had an idea. She beckoned to Pete and whispered in his ear. Next the two children went about tapping the various large, round cheeses.

Suddenly Pete called out, "Oh, oh! Pam, I think this one's hollow!" By careful examination, they found a thin line circling the cheese.

"It's been cut, that's for sure!" Pete cried. With his knife, he pried the cheese apart, and it fell open into two hollowed-out pieces.

*Inside lay a jewel-encrusted scepter!*

"Hurray! We've found the prince's secret!" Ricky jumped up and down.

"*Du store Kineser!*" cried the policeman. He grinned broadly. "You Hollisters have solved the mystery!"

"Not all of it yet," Pam said. "We still don't have the little mermaid."

Everyone now joined in examining the rest of the cheeses, but there were no more hollow ones.

"You'd better confess that you *are* in league with this gang of thieves," Eric Clausen told Smith as they led him to the police car. "It will go easier for you if you do."

"I guess you're right," the thin man said in a tone of defeat. "All right. I'll tell you everything I know about it."

The fellow, obviously not wishing to face his companions while he informed on them, poured out his

story. He said his particular job had been to signal the *Madagascar* in the Oresund.

"These cheeses are used to carry contraband," he explained. "Those guys promised to give me a big reward and talked me into being their stooge."

Smith admitted that the motor and pulley that had been found were used by the gang to operate the windmill blades just the opposite of others in the area. This action would notify the *Madagascar* that she was to stop for the little black speedboat and its stolen cargo.

"Is there more contraband on the *Madagascar* now?" Officer Jensen queried him.

"Yes," Smith muttered.

The officer left Mr. Hollister and the pilot to guard the prisoner, then ran to his radio car. He quickly notified the Helsingor police of the situation and ordered a fast official launch to be in readiness at the town pier.

The three prisoners were ordered into the police car as the Hollisters and Clausens piled into the station wagon. After a hasty ride back to Helsingor, the captured thieves were left at the police station with Officer Halker.

Officer Jensen said he would meet the family and their Danish friends at the town pier in ten minutes. The Hollister car reached there first. The children dashed to the dock, where the launch was tied. The skipper was at the wheel and the powerful motor purred quietly.

In a few minutes Officer Jensen arrived. With him were three other policemen, who stepped down into the launch.

Pete and Ricky watched eagerly as Jensen untied the line.

The officer looked up at the boys. "Would you like to go along—if your parents allow it?"

"Crickets!" cried Pete; and Ricky begged his mother and father, "Please, may we go?"

Mr. and Mrs. Hollister gave their consent.

"But do be careful," their mother said.

"We will!" The brothers leaped into the police craft.

"Good luck!" Mr. Hollister and the others called.

With a mighty roar, the launch gained speed, heading north in the Oresund. It whipped through the small waves, sending up spray which fell like mist onto the greenish waters.

For a while it seemed to Pete that they would never reach the *Madagascar*. But finally Officer Jensen, looking through binoculars, cried out, "I see her! The patrol boat is standing by."

Five minutes later the police launch overtook the gray freighter. Officer Jensen called up to the captain to throw down a ladder.

The four policemen quickly climbed aboard, and the boys scampered up after them. The skipper stayed with the launch, keeping her close to the gray ship.

On board, Pete and Ricky were introduced to the lieutenant from the patrol boat who had halted the

*Madagascar*. Then they heard a rapid exchange of Danish between the ship's captain and Officer Jensen. A quick search was made of the *Madagascar*. A shipment of cheeses was found. Inside of several, the police discovered diamonds, silver bracelets, expensive watches, and, to the Hollisters' delight, the priceless Little Mermaid figurine belonging to the royal family.

"Yikes!" Ricky cried out. "Won't Miss Petersen be happy!"

The captain and the crew of the freighter were now placed under arrest and directed to sail the vessel back to Copenhagen.

Pete and Ricky climbed into the launch with Officer Jensen, who carried the recovered valuables. Soon they were docking at Helsingor.

By this time, news of the chase had spread and a large crowd had gathered around the Hollisters and Clausens, who eagerly waited on the pier. As the police craft nudged into its berth, a loud cheer went up from the onlookers.

They cheered lustily again when the contraband was taken off the boat. The Hollisters were showered with happy praise. At the police station the family met the captain, who bowed and shook hands with each one of them.

"Congratulations to the American Hollisters!" he said. "You have done our country a great service."

The next day the children were thrilled to see their pictures in many of the Danish newspapers. In

one photograph Pete was holding the scepter and Holly the Little Mermaid figurine!

The stories in the papers reported other facts of the case gleaned by the police. Pancho Schwartz was originally from Brazil. As the children had guessed, he was the ringleader of an international band of thieves and smugglers. The tattoo on his right hand was the Brazilian flag.

Smith was the only native American in the gang, the other two being French and Swiss. All of the gang were former sailors who had worked aboard the *Madagascar* several years before.

It was Gruning who had uncovered the secret of the scepter from an old Dane living in Berne, Switzerland. The aged man, unaware of Gruning's dishonesty, had told him of the priceless scepter hidden in a church ship somewhere in Denmark. The gang of thieves had stolen and mutilated many church ships in vain before they decided to look for more information in the Copenhagen library. Gruning had found the library book and torn out the pages, but he did not know there was another volume at Kronborg Castle until it was too late.

"You beat 'em to it that time, Sis," Pete grinned.

Several months previously, Gruning's boss, Schwartz, had been in Copenhagen planning their racket. At that time he had won a cheap Little Mermaid figurine at Tivoli and kept it until he could substitute it for the valuable one. His opportunity came on the airplane.

When in the company of others, he always kept his right hand concealed to hide the Brazilian flag tattoo, which he realized would be a giveaway.

The false beard was so convincing that it had even fooled the police on several occasions. He would take it off and put it on to confuse any detective who might be trailing him. The night the Hollisters saw Schwartz in Tivoli, he had taken off his beard because it had become hot and itchy!

Under questioning, Schwartz admitted that the package he had carried that same night contained loot.

Now that the mystery was solved, the Hollister family took a leisurely tour of Denmark, including visits with Karen and *Farfar* and *Farmor*, and then with Nils and Astrid.

When the travelers returned to Copenhagen for their homeward flight to the United States, they were met by Inger Petersen. She came to their hotel as they were packing for the trip.

"I have a surprise for you," she said.

"Oh, what is it?" declared Holly. "Some yummy Danish pastry?"

Ricky grinned. "Maybe it's a toy sailboat, like *Farfar* Clausen's," he guessed.

"No," Miss Petersen smiled. "But it's something very special." She reached into her large purse, pulled out a black velvet case, and lifted the lid.

Inside lay an exquisite porcelain mermaid. But, unlike the one they had seen on the airplane, this tiny

model had a face just like Sue's, and her hair was bobbed and black.

"It's me! It's me! I'm a mermaid!" declared Sue, skipping around the room gleefully.

Miss Petersen told them, "This is a memento from the Queen. She thanks all the Happy Hollisters for solving the mystery of the Little Mermaid."







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# Meet The Happy Hollisters

From the day the five Hollister children move into the mysterious house on Pine Lake in Shoreham, adventures begin to come their way. What fun and excitement they have.

**PETE**, the oldest, is a sturdy boy of twelve, with sparkling blue eyes and blond, crew cut hair. His love for sports is shared by his sister Pam, who is ten.



**PAM**, whose real name is Pamela, has brown eyes and fluffy golden hair. She is kind to everyone and loves animals, especially their peppy collie dog, **ZIP**, whom she adopted. This faithful pet is on the go almost as much as Ricky Hollister, a seven-year-old package of perpetual motion.



Lanky **RICKY** has reddish hair, which is usually mussed, and a turned-up nose splattered with freckles. He is full of fun and sometimes teases his six-year-old sister, **HOLLY**.

But Holly, with her tomboy ways, can take it! In fact she looks a lot like Ricky, except that she has dancing brown eyes and dark hair, which she wears in pigtails. Holly's chief delight is her cat, White Nose, which she carries under her arm like a fluffy purse.



**WHITE NOSE** and her five kittens are cute too. Little Sue Hollister, the baby of the family, likes to cuddle them. Although dark-haired **SUE** is only four, she romps in all the fun which the Hollister family enjoys day in and day out.



All their friends say that this is because Mother and Daddy share in the play and in the mysteries the children solve.



Mrs. Hollister is always ready to meet any sudden need—for a surprise picnic or a helping hand. Mr. Hollister owns the *Trading Post*, a combination hardware, sports and toy shop. He is never too busy to play ball. And best of all, he likes to take his family on exciting adventures.



All those who know the family well call them the *Happy Hollisters*. When you open this book, you too can join them in their fun.